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MEMOIRS

OF THE

LATE THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

JOHN PHILPOT CURRAN.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LATE THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

JOHN PHILPOT CURRAN.

T. DAVISON, Lombard-street,
Whitefriars, London.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LEGAL, LITERARY, AND POLITICAL

LIFE

OF THE

LATE THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

JOHN PHILPOT CURRAN,

ONCE MASTER OF THE ROLLS IN IRELAND:

COMPRISING COPIOUS

ANECDOTES OF HIS WIT AND HUMOUR;

AND

A SELECTION OF HIS POETRY.

INTERSPERSED WITH OCCASIONAL

BIOGRAPHY OF HIS DISTINGUISHED COTEMPORARIES IN THE SENATE AND AT THE BAR.

BY WILLIAM O'REGAN, ESQ. BARRISTER.

Erant in eo plurimæ literæ, nec eæ vulgares, sed interiores quædam, et reconditæ: divina memoria, summa verborum et gravitas, et elegantia. CICERO.

Audivi Hiberniam olim in Eloquentia floruisse.

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PREFACE.

To give the perfect portrait of a person so distinguished for eloquence, wit, humour, literature, and taste; of one so pre-eminently gifted by nature, with the rarest and richest powers of mind, would require in the painter somewhat similar endowments. Livy said, that to draw the character of Cicero, the biographer must be another Cicero,

> "They best can paint it who have felt it most."

But as posterity would lose whatever was precious in the history of Mr. Curran's mind (for of it chiefly do I mean to treat,) if none could be found but of similar genius; if none other were to attempt it, the task must in this age be doomed to remain neglected through despair, or be imperfectly executed: and thus, from the apprehension of inadequacy, his fame would become extinct, or fade away in perishable tradition; or perhaps be fated to go down to future times, like many of the mutilated monuments of antiquity, with features distorted, or limbs broken, like those which the curiosity of an Elgin has but half preserved.

Should the character of his genius (the boast and admiration of his country) be *preserved*, and transmitted by the boldness of inferiority, distanced as it may be by his transcendency, still a great gratification is secured to the present and to other times; though he whose singular superiority should fling into shade the presumption of such an undertaking; and though he who attempts it may be scorched by the rays he so daringly approaches, *Urit enim fulgore suo, qui prægravat artes infra se positas*, yet better is it to gaze on matter, however mis-shapen, than on vacancy—on existence, than on annihilation.

Hume, to avoid misrepresentation, has

simply told the story of his own life. Raphael, or Michael Angelo, (which I forget,) unwilling to commit his immortality to any clumsy artist, made the portrait of himself. And would that Mr. Curran, following such bright examples, had given, in all the high colouring and exquisite touches of his masterly pencil, the character of a mind so truly curious and original. Cervantes, fearing the loss of fame, observed, that to translate from one language into another was like turning the seamy side of a vestment inside out. How discouraging the admonition, how humbling the analogy, when one considers how much is lost by the medium through which genius passes! However, when much is to be gained, something may be hazarded; as amidst the dangers of a tempest, to save the general cargo from a wreck, the richest merchandize, the gums of Arabia, the spices of the East, and the gems of India, are flung overboard into *the slimy bottom of the deep*: so here I may be permitted to sacrifice much where much is to be saved, and under such disadvantages to collect the scattered limbs of the poet, and console myself with the recollection, that though it be denied to me, unambitious of fame and unappalled by dangers, to describe all the traits of his genius, with a quill plucked from the wing of the Eagle of the Sun *; yet, with the accuracy

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* I have not met in any book on natural history with an account of this remarkable bird. I am indebted for what I know of it to a friend who had for several years a command in Canada, and who made himself well acquainted not only with the language, but also with the superstition of the Indian tribes. They hold this bird in great veneration; they conceive it to be the messenger sent by the Great Spirit to inspect the affairs of the world, to bring back daily reports of what occurs among the Indians, and it is supposed to be in the confidence of the Divinity. It takes wing at the rising of the sun, and directs its course with great rapidity till it reaches its destination; there it is suspended for the whole day, and presents the appearance of a round ball; it is supposed to be in close conversation with the Great Spirit during the whole time it continues there, and that when it descends to the earth it is employed on errands, and particularly to spy into the actions of the tribes. They attribute to it pretty nearly the functions assigned to Mercury, but with larger powers. The one had in heathen mythology a kind of brevet rank, whilst this bird is supposed to partake of the divinity; and so valuable is its plumage, that the hunter who is so fortunate as to get possession of the bird is raised to a high rank among the tribes, and is considered to be a favourite with Heaven.

of an inferior talent, Lord Mansfield lived to see his sublime conceptions, his profound reasonings, and all the ornaments of his masterly and finished eloquence, of his luminous and comprehensive understanding, shorn of their beams in the prosing accuracy of a Burrow.

For Murray, long enough his country's pride,
Is now no more than Tully or than Hyde.

There is a fragment written by Edmund Smith upon the works of Philips, and transcribed from the Bodleian manuscript, so much to my present purpose, that by breaking it up into parts, and accommodating it to the present object, I strengthen by its authority some of those observations which arise out of, and apply to, the present subject. He says, "it is altogether as equitable some account should be given of those who have distinguished themselves by their writings, as of those who are renowned for great actions; it is but reasonable they who contribute so much to the immortality of others should have some share in it themselves (be they poets, orators, or historians, it matters not); for no men," he adds, "who respect themselves, will write their own panegyrics; and it is very hard they should go without reputation only because they the more deserve it."

The French are very just to eminent men in this point: not a learned man nor a poet can die, but all Europe must be acquainted with his accomplishments: they give praise and expect it in their turn: they commend their *Patrus* and *Molieres,* as well as their *Condes* and *Turennes.* Their *Pellisons* and *Racines* have their eulogies, as well as the prince whom they celebrate: and their poems, their mercuries, and orations, nay, their very gazettes, are filled with the praises of the learned.

I am satisfied had they a Curran among them, and had known how to value him, had they had one of his learning, his wit, but, above all, that *particular turn of humour, that altogether new genius*, he had been an example to their poets and orators, and a subject of their panegyrics; and, perhaps, set in competition with the ancients, to whom only he ought (if ought) to submit. As Johnson has adopted this illustration, I need not be ashamed to use it.

The Greeks certainly transmitted the memory of their illustrious men; and if any country which abounds so much in genius, and in letters, can be found more inattentive than another to this point, it is Ireland. Possibly not so much to the perfection of taste, to the cultivation of literature, or to all that enriched Athens with the arts, is she so much indebted for her immortality as to biography and history. No star ever appeared in that clear firmament, in that galaxy of heroes, statesmen, philosophers, orators and poets, sculptors and painters, whose course in their heaven has not been marked from its first appearance to its setting; and if it went down in one horizon, its lustre was scarcely dimmed when it rose refulgent in another. There was a religious sentiment mixed in their admiration of excellence; and by their personifications, they peopled another world. Grossness of superstition, and refinement of taste, were extremes which with them met at a point in the circle: but whenever they exalted the works of genius, there was an ethic principle observable even in their wildest and most monstrous fancies: every perfection became embodied: they gave reality to abstraction. If they made Apollo a god, they held out for imitation his excellencies: and their Venus was an assemblage of the scattered ideas of their *beau ideal.* If sensuality debased the lovely form, yet genius created it. If, in the admiration of this productive power, (and that being our own,) I have fallen into error, I stand at the bar of public taste, not as a solitary culprit: by my side are arraigned my country, and by my country let me be tried.

Of a country so renowned for a continued succession of illustrious men, fewer monuments are preserved in Ireland than in any other nation. History has scarcely condescended to give them a place. The traits which have outlived its great actors are scanty, scattered, and meagre: the patriotism of literature which elevates the character of a people, has devoted little of its labours to this department. Had a portion of its exertions been thus directed, had the pen been more employed, we might have been earlier known to England; and perhaps been more respected: perhaps national jealousies and their causes might have been long since buried in the same tomb. Impressed by the benevolence of such reasoning, and influenced by the importance of a similar sentiment, Dr. Robertson sat down to write his last, possibly his most philanthropic, certainly his most beautiful work, in behalf of several millions of the mild and harmless inhabitants of the East, subject to our dominion, and, as he conceived, not sufficiently regarded. Influenced by the purest morality, he has brought before the eye, not merely of Europe, but of the world, the monuments of India's ancient grandeur; accounts of her early civilization; her progress in the arts, and the warlike resistance made by that amiable people to the invasion of Alexander. All this, with the exalted view of inspiring a generous respect for realms never visited by him. This noble purpose he proposed to effect, by shewing that their character deserved the best feelings of humanity, and a more considerate treatment than they have hitherto experienced. Had they possessed no history, his mighty pen could have had no employment; he could not have left them the legacy he has bequeathed. Unlike to Alexander, he has left his ring—not to a Perdiccas, but to humanity.

What records have we of those who flourished for the last fifty years, the most memorable period of our history? Where then, in what archives, are deposited the monuments of our illustrious dead? Where, but in Lodge's Peerage, are to be found any traces of Anthony Malone, of Lord Perry, or of our late Demosthenes, Lord Avonmore? Where are their works, their words, and actions, preserved? In the fugitive pieces of the day, or in the perishable and perishing journal of a blue paper report: they are nearly gone. A Flood, with all his Pindaric fire; a Burgh, whose tongue was persuasion; and the long roll of great names, are nearly now no more. *Omnes hi ignotis periere mortibus.*

Have Mr. Grattan, Mr. Plunket, Mr. Saurin, Mr. Bushe, no concern in their immortality? Is there one eminent man in Scotland, whose history is not blazoned forth, from a Hume to a Burns? What a rich harvest have they not reaped from the toil of that affecting ploughman! In Scotland they have hoarded every thing, whilst our abundant materials are neglected, like the fruits which blossom, ripen, and decay on the bosom of that generous soil which produces them in such exuberance and profusion.

> *Our works* are like to poppies strewn,
> You seize the flow'r, the bloom is gone:
> Or, like the snow, falls in the river,
> A moment white, then melts for ever;
> Or, like the Borealis' race,
> Which flits ere you can point the place;
> Or, like the rainbow's lovely form,
> Evanishing amidst the storm!
>
> Burns.

MEMOIRS

OF THE LATE THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

JOHN PHILPOT CURRAN.

In the village of Newmarket, in the county of Cork, at the distance of eight miles from that dismantled castle, where Spenser is said to have composed his "Faery Queen," the Right Honourable John Philpot Curran, the subject of the present Memoir, was born.

He was the son of John Curran, who was of an English stock, transplanted from one of the northern counties, (I suppose Cumberland,) and encouraged to settle in that part of Ireland, under the protection of the highly respectable family of the Allworths; who retain considerable landed estates there, to the present time, acquired after the fall of the Desmonds, whether by the sword, by grant, or by purchase, I am not apprized.

The original name of Mr. Curran's ancestors was Curwen, but since altered into Curran. His mother's name was Philpot; of an ancient, and still respectable Irish family. He has been heard to say, that whatever were his intellectual pretensions, he was indebted to her for them. He said she spoke even the Irish language with such purity, with such fluency, and such a smack, as he expressed it, that the West Country people used to flock round her from distant parts, and listen to her with admiration and delight. So much was he impressed with the obligations conferred on him by the transmission of her genius; (and his country rejoices in the preference,) that he, in addition to the affections of nature, had manifested to her, through life, strong marks of kindness and of love; and imposed some restraints on his own vivacity and enjoyment of social intercourse, by domesticating her in his own family: and when she wished to return to the repose of a more private life, and more congenial habits, he assigned a fund perfectly adequate to her comforts and desires.

His father's means were so humble, that he drew the chief support of a numerous family from the office of Seneschal of the manor of Newmarket. Thus circumstanced, he was unable to do more than to support Mr. Curran at a grammar school in the village of his birth; where he got the first rudiments of his education at one of those old Irish schools, in which the Latin and Greek languages were radically taught. No time was spent there in lisping prosody, or in composing nonsense verses: it passed in learning the root and frame of the languages; and some of the most distinguished scholars of that country have been educated in these humble seminaries. In this very village school, all that was celebrated in wit, learning, and law, in the persons of Lord Avonmore, and of Mr. Keller, had their beginnings.

Mr. Curran began very soon to develope the force of his great talents. The spring of his mind threw out its blossoms in quick and early vegetation, with an exuberant promise of fruit: No blight had power to throw into the sear or yellow leaf, those buds of hope, which his latter life did not disappoint. The benevolence, and the promised protection of the Allworths, flung a mantle over his infancy and youth. A lady of that name speedily transplanted him to the school of Middleton, a large and well established seminary in that county; there he became the favourite, and the hope that through him its fame would be widely extended; and though he did not then, or there, leave any track portending those streams of light which afterwards shone forth with such brilliancy; yet the parents of his school-fellows frequently came to see *him* who outstepped all others.

Mrs. Allworth was benevolent; perhaps, for his taste, too ostentatious to secure his sincerest praise. It appears from the anecdote, that she delighted in the credit of a bountiful action, and the glitter of it, with equal or more sincerity than in the quiet sensation of internal pleasure; she appeared not to be over fond of paying down in ready money for so light an article as good words. However that may be, even at that early period of his youth, she was not left unnoticed by the keen and penetrating eye of Mr. Curran, who remarked, " It is not to be wondered at, that she does not do all that is expected of her. To be enabled so to do, nature should have supplied her with three hands. It is impossible that, stintedly furnished as she is, she could accomplish the great purposes of her heart; she is not prepared for so enlarged a charity. Such in truth is her benevolence, that she would have occasion for the constant employment of three hands; but having only two, and these always engaged, one in holding the petition of the poor, the other in wiping away the tears which flow for their distresses; and not having a third to put into her pocket for their relief, she is thus rendered incapable of administering to their wants; but still she is excellent, and her heart is bountiful."

With this family he was in some degree connected by relationship, and a close friendship for a long time subsisted between them; I am not apprized that it was ever after interrupted, as both in his school and college vacations, he passed much of his time with them, and was always kindly received, not only there, but among the Wrixons, and others of the first rank in that part of the country. And here it was (he has been heard to declare), he formed the first notions of oratory.

The wakes in the country parts of Ireland present an odd assemblage of different characters, and of different passions. The real genius of the people is no where so well, or so openly displayed, as at those nightly meetings. It is a theatre on which tragedy, comedy, broad farce, match-making, speech-making, &c. all that is *bizarre* and comical in the genuine Irish character, develope themselves with a freedom truly fantastic. Here the scenes are shifted with a rapidity of change, and an unrestrained succession, quite surpassing any other drama. The transitions from the deepest and most impassioned tones of sorrow, to mirth and humour, are quick as thought. There is a melancholy in their mirth, and a mirth in their melancholy, which is often found to prevail in their music, and which was a character impressed on national sensibility, by successive changes of ill fortune; and as no one passion is permitted to continue very long, they mingle and vary like shades of light and darkness playing upon the surface of a sullen stream: or, like those blazes intermittingly shot forth by the Persian fire-flies* on the Meinham tree, which glittering in their confusion, shed their most beautiful lights in regular irregularity.

At one of those national carnivals, where the common excitements of snuff, tobacco, and whiskey, and the fruits of plundered orchards, are abundantly supplied, Mr. Curran felt the first dawn, the new-born light, and favourite transport which almost instantly seized upon his imagination, and determined his mind to the cultivation and pursuit of oratory. It was produced by the speech of a tall, finely shaped woman, with long black hair flowing loosely down her shoulders; her stature and eye commanding; her air and manner austere and majestic. On such occasions nothing is prepared; all arises out of the emotion excited by the surrounding circumstances and objects; and if the *Corinne* has been highly celebrated by Madame De Stael, this woman has found in Mr. Curran an eulogist not surpassed even by the enthusiastic and rapturous descriptions of the French novelist, by a recorder not less national, certainly not less touching.

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* See Note A. at the end of the volume.

Some of the kindred of the deceased had made funeral orations on his merits: they measured their eulogies by his bounties; he was wealthy; his last will had distributed among his relations his fortune and effects; but to this woman, who married without his consent, to her, his favourite niece, a widow, and with many children, he carried his resentment to the grave, and left her poor and totally unprovided for. She sat long in silence, and at length, slowly, and with a measured pace, approaching the dead body from a distant quarter of the room, with the serenest calm of meditation, laying her hand on his forehead, she paused; and whilst all present expected a passionate and stormy expression of her anger and disappointment, she addressed these few words to him: "Those of my kindred who have uttered praises, and poured them forth with their tears to the memory of the deceased, did that, which by force of obligation they were bound to do. They have been benefited; they have, in their different degrees, profited by that bounty which he could no longer withhold. He forgot in his life the exercise of that generosity by which his memory might now be held regarded and embalmed in the hearts of a disinterested affection. Such consolation, however, as these purchased praises could impart to his spirit, I would not, by any impiety, tear from him. Cold in death is this head, not colder than that heart when living, through which no thrill of nature did ever vibrate. This has thrown the errors of my youth, and of an impulse too obedient to that affection which I still cherish, into poverty and sorrow, heightened beyond hope by the loss of him who is now in Heaven, and still more by the tender pledges he has left after him on earth. But I shall not add to these reflections the bitter remorse of inflicting even a merited calumny; and because my blood coursed through his veins, I shall not have his memory scored or tortured by the expression of my disappointment, or of the desolation which sweeps through my heart. It therefore best becomes me to say, his faith and honour in the other relations of life were just and exact; and that these may have imposed a severity on his principles and manners. The tears which now swell my eyes are those I cannot check; but they rise like bubbles on the mountain-stream, they burst never more to appear*."

By accidentally meeting a treatise on painting, the mind of Sir Joshua Reynolds was, in like manner, determined to that beautiful art, of which he afterwards became the boast, the honour, and the brightest ornament. To that occasion we owe the great master of the British school; and the latter strange incident fixed the resolution of Mr. Curran to the study of eloquence. He had but to give that direction to the material which he found in his own nature; all the elements were there, and the best combinations were easily formed by the union of capacity and of desire.

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* The speech of Logan, in Morse's Geography of America, has touches equally striking.

It was not among the rhetoricians he formed himself, though they founded a great society in the best times of the Greek republics, and persuaded Athens to appoint them generals and ambassadors, and to confide to them the management of state affairs, under the fatal error, that because they could speak well, they could act well, and advise with discretion. Though this false and hypocritical set of jugglers ran a long race of success, yet, like every thing deceitful, they were detected; they were exposed by one of their own sophisms, which is worth retaining for its ridicule*.

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* Epimenides was a Cretan; Epimenides said that all the Cretans were liars; Epimenides being a Cretan, all the Cretans could not be liars: therefore Epimenides was a liar: therefore all the Cretans could not be liars, *et sic de cæteris.*

Nor was it in those debating societies, which seem to be modelled from the early sophists, that he fed the lamp of his youthful mind. He found within himself the happy power of giving shapes and exquisite forms to the beings of his own creation. Whether passing from images of terror to the soft and tender touches of pathos; whether he sported in the laugh of comedy, or in the broad grin of farce, he was equally successful in all. If he would hurl the bolt of a Jupiter, shake thrones, and appal tyrants, you might conceive it was the work of Homer! Would he move to pity, you had all the effect of Virgil; and would he excite to mirth or laughter, you might have fancied yourself conversing with a Congreve. Such was his excellence in each of these departments, that he may have placed himself nearly at the head of each; yet, though he rejected with fastidiousness to form himself either on the plans of the sophists, or of those societies which prefer words to ideas, talking to thinking, he furnished his mind from the great stores of antiquity, and enriched it with much of the best and purest modern literature. By both he chastened the wanderings of his own luxuriant imagination, and regulated the branches without injuring the tree; the sap was directed to feed the trunk, not to waste its aliment in idle foliage, or in gaudy flowers.

The history of the babyism of a boy can never be sufficiently interesting to excite minute attention. Though it is said of some one that he never was a child, yet anecdotes of infancy, if attainable, should be confined to the nurseries, where they may, like the legends of fairies, make an intellectual repast for gossips and fond mothers.

It is now of little value to be informed, that Cato gave indications of his firmness by not evincing or shewing any signs of fear, when he was held out of a window: equally so to learn, that Pascall was flung out on a dunghill by his parents, doubtful, from his deformity, to what class of animals he properly belonged, till philosophy decided, and claimed him as her own. Man, like history, has its obscure periods; Hume has passed by the early stages of society with a sweeping observation, that the records of such times are scanty and scarcely worth noticing, or if preserved, not worthy of attention.

There exists a parody by Mr. Curran, of the Seven Ages of Shakespear; some part of the order there adopted I mean to pursue in the division of this labour, intending to use the freedom of being occasionally unconfined by the exact regularity of time. In the second stage, we find Mr. Curran in Trinity College, Dublin, and in all the green of youth. One of those works which early attracted his attention, was Rousseau's Eloise. The romance of this extraordinary production fevered his imagination, and, aided by the warmth of its diction, he made some improvident and unhallowed engagements. The board of senior fellows, the moral and literary censors of that learned society, conceiving some great scandal offered to the purity of their *moral*, (and it being true as reported,) summoned the young delinquent before their Areopagus, who, in his own words, appeared as Horace did on his first introduction to the court of Augustus, *pauca et singultim locutus*. The culprit stood before them in all that may be conceived lacrymose in feature, penitent in exterior, yet internally unmoved. After a long lecture, delivered in Hebrew, and explained into Greek, the accusation amounted in plain English to this, that he kept idle women in his chambers, and concluded according to the form of the statute and good morals. He saw he had no way to escape but by the exercise of his wit, and he quickly made a somerset, by assuring them that the accusation was utterly unfounded, as he never in his life kept any women idle in his rooms.

An examination for fellowships about this time taking place, where the severest trial in logics, metaphysics, mathematics, natural and moral philosophy, the Newtonian system, &c. &c., as also in history, chronology, the Greek, Latin, and Hebrew languages, and in whatever may be connected with those stupendous masses of science and literature, where the human mind is wrought to whatever at so early a period it is supposed to be, in the proudest boast and expectation of our faculties, capable of, Mr. Curran attending with Mr. Egan, afterwards an eminent barrister and member of parliament, these gentlemen, not exactly attentive to the precise costume of the Parisian or New Bond-street beaux, were negligent of their appearance. That animal which ladies never see upon themselves, but often on miss's bonnet, was observed on the black ground of Mr. Curran's napless and unbrushed coat; Mr. Egan, a good-natured friend, quickly pointed to the distress, and asked Mr. Curran *Cujum pecus?* Mr. C. looking at Egan, archly replied, "*Non meus, sed Egonis; nuper mihi tradidit Egon.*"

There was a wrong quantity pronounced by one of the candidates for scholarship, in reading this line in Horace—

> "Septimius, Claudi nimirum intelligit unus."

The candidate was much confounded at his mistake in pronouncing the word "*nimirum.*" Mr. Curran observed, he should feel nothing for the error, as there was but one man in Rome, even at that time, where the language was best understood, who knew the word; for it appeared by the testimony of Horace, that Septimius alone understood *nimirum*.

A barrister of the name of *Going* had, among other pleasantries, a favourite story, which he so agreeably exaggerated every time he told it, that at length it became too monstrous for belief. He was charged with this in presence of Mr. Curran, who observed, that the story was not the worse for being enlarged, that it was an excellent story, and had the merit of proceeding like Fame;—"*Nam vires acquirit eundo*;" i. e. "it gathers strength by *going*."

A gentleman of very ordinary countenance, whose forehead was so prominent on the one side that it rose like a rugged hill, while on the other it was depressed like a valley, being charged by one of his friends with an affair of gallantry, blushed exceedingly, and defended himself from the imputation by good humouredly offering his deformity as a proof of his innocence; on which Mr. Curran observed:—"On the *first blush* I should think you ought to be acquitted, but the maxim is still strong against you—*Fronti nulla fides, nimium ne crede colori*."

Some early and happy pieces of his wit were bandied about, and were considered to rival some of Dryden's; of whose the best appears to have arisen from a theme given him at school, on the disputed question whether Brutus did well or ill in killing Cæsar. It ran in these terms; "*An Brutus occiso Cæsare, aut bene fecit aut male fecit?*" Dryden, too idle, forgot the task, and being suddenly called on, he immediately answered, "*Brutus occiso Cæsare, nec bene fecit nec male fecit,* SED INTERFECIT." This is preserved in some of the fragments of the works of Addison.

In college, Mr. Curran's attention to the deeper and graver studies met with frequent interruptions from the vivacity of his own temperament. Highly qualified as he was to impart the richest pleasures to society, his company was earnestly solicited; still, however, he made considerable advances in science, particularly in metaphysics and morality, and he cultivated classic learning with great eagerness; and there it was he laid the foundation of a solid and intimate acquaintance with the Greek and Latin authors; with those standard works of antiquity which ever after imparted a polish and taste, to be derived only from such great models, which shew out their simple and grand forces, in all the vigour of fresh feeling and hardihood. His favourite authors were Virgil, Homer, and Horace; these he never after laid down through the whole series of his life; they were sources of endless pleasure to him; while the purest modern classics in the English and French literature became equally familiar to him; and in short, he may be described to be a scholar of the first order, like Wolsley, *an early, an apt, and a good one*. To these stores he added some theological reading, and the Bible was often the subject of his most serious consideration; possibly, as well to examine the grounds of revelation, as to drink from the fountain of those fine and frequently sublime passages of Oriental poetry, in which it abounds, particularly in Isaiah and the Psalms. His allusions to these were frequent and felicitous; and as he once said, "It would be a reproach not to examine the merits and subject of a work in which all mankind are so much engaged, and have taken so deep an interest." Be the inducement what it may, be his own private opinions on the mysteries of revelation what they may, it was a topic he little dwelt upon, and on which when he spoke, he never did so with the irreverence of a Voltaire, or the studied and occasion-seeking sarcasm of a Gibbon*.

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* There is a beautiful illustration in Mr. Curran's speech for the Rev. Charles Massy *v.* the Marquis of Headfort, of the happiness of his allusion to the Scripture. In speaking of the impossibility of a perfect security in the possession of Mrs. Massy, he says, "She is giving to you at this moment a pledge of her infidelity by deserting her husband. You are a married man; she also is married. Ere you can bind her in that sacred union, you yet have two *sepulchres* to pass."

Mr. Burke, in giving the history of the House of Convocation as it existed in the early constitution of England, was equally fortunate; he observed, that though in later times it had fallen into practical disuse, yet it still lived in the records of the country, and he concluded his account of it by saying, for Lazarus "is not dead, but sleepeth."

Of the same class was an anecdote related of Lord Chatham. He had occasion in the House of Lords to censure those who were the advisers of the king, and looking round among the benches, he asked, "Was it you, my lord?" and to another, "Was it you?" Some symptom of fear having manifested itself in the countenance of Lord Mansfield, Lord Chatham quickly perceiving it, he exclaimed,

"Now Festus trembleth."

We now approach the luminous period of Mr. Curran's life, when the difficulties which had obscured his early dawn began rapidly to pass away, and by their departure to permit his powers to shine forth in burning brilliancy, with a force of conception, a novelty and variety of combination, and a copiousness and richness of expression, in which the English language actually broke down under him, and in all of which the illustrious men of his own times looked upon him as unrivalled.

His *destin* placed him in his proper sphere ; most other men form erroneous judgements of their fitness for the particular pursuits in which they are about to engage,—*many are called, but few are chosen;* few are found altogether fortunate in that momentous election.

When we consider the peculiar adaptation and cast of Mr. Curran's mind for all the enterprize and activity of the profession he adopted, his spirit, capacity, and energy, probably few men in the history of the law approached that temple with more powerful pretensions. We accordingly find him called to the Irish bar in 1775 ; a race of illustrious men had then preceded him, and were sinking on the horizon. The late chief baron Burgh, whose persuasive eloquence made an æra at the Irish bar and in the senate, equally distinguished for the grace and harmony of his style, and the sweetness and fulness of his voice ; of him it may be said, as of the Greek orator, *he was the Bee*. Of Mr. Burgh the following anecdote is related : Mr. Burgh and Mr. Yelverton being both engaged on opposite sides in some great and important cause, all the powers of their talents were called forth, as well by the interest the case excited, as by a competition for fame : in speaking of the effect of Mr. Burgh's oration, Mr. Yelverton observed to a friend, that he would have been satisfied that he had obtained the victory; " But," said he, " when I perceived an old *case-hardened attorney* sitting in a distant corner of the court, and saw the tears silently coursing down his iron cheeks, and these wrung from him by the touching eloquence of Mr. Burgh, I confess," said Mr. Yelverton, " I felt myself vanquished."

Barry Yelverton, afterwards Lord Avonmore, probably possessed more of the vehemence of masculine intellect than most others of his countrymen. Comprehensive and luminous, of a copious wit and extensive erudition, he was among the order of talent which Mr. Curran was to succeed. Lord Clonmell had a coarse jocularity, which was received as an useful talent. Mr. Burgh had the majesty of Virgil, and Duquery the elegance of Addison. The eldest Emmet possessed the vigour of a great and original mind; he was certainly a person of singular natural and acquired endowments; a man who read Coke on Littleton in his bed, as others do Tom Jones or the Persian Tales. Of the chaste, accomplished and classic Duquery, it is related on his own authority, that he read Robertson on the day before his best displays, to catch his unrivalled style, and to harmonize his composition by that of the master of historic eloquence. He had also to contend with the wit of Mr. Keller, and the unbending stubbornness of Hoare, a person in whom, if but one wreck was left behind, you discern the marks of what genius, unaided as it was, could achieve in the figure of the Cornish plunderer.

"But if a sickly appetite cannot be controlled, and must be fed with perpetual supplies of dearly purchased variety, let the wealth he commands and abuses, procure it, without breaking in upon the peace and honour of respectable families. The noble lord proceeded to the completion of his diabolical project, not with the rash precipitancy of youth, but with the most cool and deliberate consideration. The Cornish plunderer, intent on spoil, callous to every touch of humanity, shrouded in darkness, holds out false lights to the tempest-tost vessel, and lures her and her pilot to that shore upon which she must be lost for ever, —the rock unseen, the ruffian invisible, and nothing apparent but the treacherous signal of security and repose; so this prop of the throne, this pillar of the state, this stay of religion, the ornament of the peerage, this common protector of the people's privileges, and of the crown's prerogatives, descends from these high grounds of character, to muffle himself in the gloom of his own base and dark designs, to play before the eyes of the deluded wife and the deceived husband, the falsest lights of love to the one, and of friendly and hospitable regards to the other, until she is at length dashed upon that hard bosom, where her honour and happiness are wrecked and lost for ever; the agonized husband beholds the ruin with those sensations of misery and of horror, which you can better feel than I describe; her, upon whom he had embarked all his hopes and all his happiness in this life, the treasure of all his earthly felicities, the rich fund of all his hoarded joys, sunk before his eyes into an abyss of infamy, or if any fragment escape, escaping to solace, to gratify, to enrich her vile destroyer. Such, gentlemen, is the act upon which you are to pass your judgement; such is the injury upon which you are to set a price *."

Of the caustic acerbity of Mr. Hoare, this anecdote was related by himself to the Editor:—In a notable conflict between him and the late judge Robinson, (suppose it so,) whose temper was so vitriolic that he became the object of universal dislike; the judge was small and peevish, Mr. Hoare strong and solemn; the former had been powerfully resisted by the uncompromising sternness of the latter; at length, the judge charged him with a desire to bring the king's commission into contempt. "No, my lord," said Mr. Hoare, "I have read in a book that when a peasant, during

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* This is an extract from Mr. Hoare's speech on behalf of the Reverend Charles Massy, plaintiff, against the Marquis of Headfort.

the troubles of Charles the First, found the king's crown in a bush, he shewed to it all marks of reverence; but I will go a step farther, for though I should find the king's commission even on a *bramble*, still I shall respect it."

John Fitzgibbon, afterwards lord Clare, and lord high chancellor of Ireland, was a competitor whose ardent and energetic decision of character, whose precision of mind and legal capacity, rendered him a formidable rival. They did not uniformly run the same course of competition: Mr. Curran was not early qualified to start for the hunter's plate, nor had he ever much taste for the Olympics of a Castle chase; for such, he said, he was short by the head. Yet Mr. Curran often repeated, that had not the father of Mr. Fitzgibbon pre-occupied the ground for his son, by one stage, he never should or could have gone beyond him. But whenever these high-mettled racers started fairly, and on an equal plain, Mr. Curran was always first at the winning post. So rapidly did his fame spread, that shortly after he was called to the bar, he was employed (in one of those sanguinary elections for the county of Tipperary,) for Daniel Toler, Esq. (the eldest brother of Lord Norbury,) a person not to be passed without the notice of all respect due to a gentleman of exquisite wit, universally beloved, and who sat twice in parliament for that county. It was by the desire of Lord Norbury, Mr. Curran was retained. When the messenger came to inform him, he was found playing in a Ball Court, in his native village of Newmarket; and the object being announced, he said, "I will take the ball at the first hop." He had to contend with all the violence and fierceness which then, and often since, have been exhibited on that angry stage, where nothing carries an election but the heaviest purse and the longest sword. On that occasion he manifested a spirit not to be reduced, address and ability not to be surpassed, and he brought into action his wit, and all the energies of a youthful and of an useful mind.

On his return to Dublin, he was moving on to dine with the now Lord Norbury, the present chief justice of the Common Pleas, a nobleman also equally distinguished for wit and urbanity, for the finest temper, and the greatest kindness to the bar and public; his dinner hours were late, which Mr. Curran always disliked. Mr. Toler was going to take his ride, and meeting Mr. Curran walking towards his house to dine, passingly said, "Do not forget, Curran, you dine with me to day;" "I rather fear, my friend," replied Mr. Curran, "it is you who may forget it."

The motto to the first carriage he set up on the strength of his fees was, PER VARIOS CASUS, on which some person observed, that he prudently omitted the latter part of the sentence, *per tot discrimina rerum,* which gave him, he said, a better opinion of his judgement than he was otherwise inclined to entertain. It being remarked to him that he might have still something more appropriate; he answered, "Why, yes, to be sure, *Ore tenus,* but the herald painter dissuaded me; he did not like the brevity of wit; and being then engaged about discovering amidst the bones of the crusaders, armorial bearings suitable to the motto, I left to him the profit of two syllables, and he counted out the letters; a course, since very wisely, I assure you, adopted in Chancery. Nay, I rather think also by the common law courts; and thus you perceive, my friend, from what small sources great rivers begin to flow. God knows they sometimes do inundate without fertilizing; but things being so, who can force back those noxious streams?"

Mr. Curran, in one of his early excursions to England, happened to travel in a public coach with a well fed, well dressed, well powdered, conceited young clergyman, fresh from Oxford. The world was new to him, and he furnished one of those lamentable instances of the influence of prejudice even over an educated mind. He had under his protection two beautiful young female relatives. Mr. Curran's figure, and the neglect of his person, presented the reverse of every thing which could prepossess; and this aided to puff out the parson's pride. Mr. Curran, lean as Cassius, with an ill-fashioned Cork-cut coat (for which he once made this apology on going into a packet, then sailing for England, that no man in his senses should ever venture to sea, without a *Cork-jacket*;) was flung off at a mortifying distance by the reserve and pride of the company. Under this feeling he was smarting and much annoyed for the first forty miles of a long and unpromising journey to London. In this state of suppuration he reflected that this *swell* was nothing but like all other bubbles which break under the beam of superior intelligence; and that by letting out the gas of conceit, the balloon would rapidly descend.

Tired of this popinjay's stupid vanity and stilted affectation, and having a cheerless and dreary prospect before him, he reflected that every thing is worth something. Having read in Gulliver's Travels, that a philosopher condescended to extract sun-beams from cucumbers, he hit upon the project of relieving himself from this contemptible and oppressive incubus, which weighed him down like an overloaded atmosphere, by sacrificing something to his vanity; and by the master-key of making himself ridiculous in the first instance, he was sure to gain an introduction to the attention of the company. This was effected at a blow; he looked harshly on the parson, kindly on the ladies; surveyed all, and threw on himself an eye of contempt, so as to shew signs of self-inferiority: and flinging loose his folded arms, burst forth into a loud exclamation—"Oh! I wish to Jasus I was back again in Dublin, and that I had never put my foot in this inhospitable and unpolite country!" The point was carried: the doctor smirked and smiled at the ladies, as much as to say, we have a rare treat here, this *Hirish* is red hot from his bogs. A perfect self-sufficiency began to beam on the doctor's countenance; and elated with a victory he had never won, he proceeded to pluck the laurels. "O then I perceive, my good friend, you are *Hirish*." "Yes, your honour, and, by Jasus, I would rather than the £40 I brought over with me, to buy threads, and tapes, and needles, at one of your manufacturing towns, to be back again: for I don't hope for luck, or grace, or happiness, while ever I stay among you." "Then, I suppose, you are in trade?" "Oh yes! I am a Dublin shopkeeper, and it is there the first gentleman in the land, or in the city, would speak civilly and politely to his fellow creature." "What pleasure do you find in that country? what amusements have you?" "Amusements! were you never in Dublin? were you never in the upper gallery in Crow-street? or if you weren't, where were you born? God Almighty help you, it is there you would see the fun, and the wit. It would be worth your while to step across; and if you were never there, that is the only spot in the known world worth talking of." "Surely, my good friend, it cannot be, you should pass all your time there! there are nights you cannot spend in this manner." "'Tis very true, Sir, but it isn't my fault; for if I could help it, it is there I would pass every night." "But, Sir, on other nights, as soon as your shop is shut, how do you dispose of yourself?" "I go in and read a book for my wife, while she rocks the cradle." "What books do you read, give me leave to ask?" "What books, why Erasmus, and a pretty book it is." "Very well, indeed. And pray, do your women understand Latin?" "Yes, and Greek too; and often do I read the Greek of Homer to her, and she to me." "Oh, my friend, it is impossible that either your wife or you can understand these books. Do you mean to say she *understands* the Greek and Latin languages?" "You are welcome to try me, Doctor; and as for the wife, she being a Kerry woman, could answer for herself, if she were here (and I wish to God she were), much better than I for myself." "Did you ever read the *Naufragium?*" "Oh yes, where the shipwreck was, and where the lovely lady was perishing, and a lovelier never yet was seen, except the two beautiful creatures I am now gazing upon with so much pleasure; and may God preserve their beautiful faces from suffering either by sea or by land! And I think one of them is as like Helen in Homer, whom old King Priam contrived to fall in love with, and the other so like Venus, that they were the very images of those now before me."

The ladies began now, for the first time, to look with a softer air of condescension; and Mr. Curran, having by that whiff of incense secured a party, proceeded with more courage. "Now, Doctor, as I have answered all your questions, may I be allowed to ask you in turn, if you have read Echo in Erasmus?" "Why, not very well; it was written by a Popish priest, and its doctrines are not in our Church held to be Orthodox, yet it may be, though I cannot say that I have read it; but what of that?" "Why, Doctor, this of that, that though Erasmus was a Popish priest, he has taught Echo many witty things; when he asks, *Quidnam querunt, qui querunt sacerdotium?* Echo answers, *otium*, and asks again, *quidnam aliud querit Sacerdos?* Echo, *Kerdos*. Now, Doctor, that the ladies may know all, for instance, supposing (and I beg their pardons), that they have not been taught these languages, since they and the old religion went out of fashion long before their time, with Queen Elizabeth; the substance translated is, that the clergy are fond of *ease* and *gain*, and this, doctor, accounts for your fat and fine clothes." The ladies saw the point, they saw the Doctor in danger, though the Church was safe. The tide began to turn. The Doctor resorted to anger, the last refuge of dulness and of detected ignorance, and told the shop-keeper he was *wastly wulgar;* that these *hairs* did not become him, and, like Lubin Log in the play, hastily asked for his *Numparrel.*

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Mr. Curran perceiving the distress, and wishing to lighten it for the moment, told some anecdotes directed to the taste and understanding of the ladies; preserving in all he said a strict attention to Grammar, and occasionally enriching his tones with all the fatness of the Irish brogue, He still kept the Doctor in view, and gave him only time to recover, that he might with more effect finish with him. He amused them with anecdotes of the turn, wit, and humour of the peasantry of his country. An Irish witness, he said, was called on the table to give evidence, and having a preference for his own language, first, as that in which he could best express himself; next, as being a poor Celt, he loved it for its antiquity; but above all other reasons, that he could better escape cross-examination by it: and wishing to appear mean and poor, and therefore a mere Irish, he was observed, on coming into court, to take the buckles cunningly out of his shoes. The reason of this was asked by counsel, and one of the country people, his opponent in the suit, cried out, "The reason, my lord, is, that that fellow does not like to appear to be *master of two tongues*." He now and then amused the Doctor's prejudices by stories of Irish priests. On the first visit which a young clergyman of this order made to Paris, he discovered his uncle, who, though a Doctor of the Sorbonne, was not so learned as the young friar was taught to expect. The uncle came to see him in his lodgings, badly provided with furniture, and with a very meagre library: on taking leave he said, "*Vale, Doctor, sine Libris!*" (farewel, Doctor, without Books). The nephew returned the visit, and on departing, surveyed the splendid apartments, and well stocked library of his uncle; and bowing, said, "*Valete Libri, sine Doctore!*" (farewel Books, without a Doctor). The ladies felt the allusion, and the Doctor was lost in the laugh; they, however, thought they could trace a resemblance.

He entertained them with an anecdote of an Irish tenant in Kerry, who came to pay his rent of £500, and the lady of the house perceiving he had a propensity to play, she being very ugly, of a musty, dingy countenance, with a bad squint, and who never looked straightly at any object but a pack of cards, or the money set on the game. She prevailed on him, however, to play, till he had lost all his money, and she still continued to encourage him, relying on his honour now that his money was lost. At length, fixing his eyes fiercely on her, he excused himself, declaring in a decided tone, that he would play no more with her ladyship, for that she had the devil's *look* and her *own*.

By this time, the Doctor having regained somewhat of his temper by the aids of dinner, and a little port wine, Mr. Curran resumed the conversation, and made enquiries as to the English course of studies; to all which he got short and uncourteous answers, not satisfactory to either. "Doctor," said he, "give me leave to ask you, have you read Milton's Paradise Lost, with Addison's Criticisms?" The doctor turned round peevishly, and told him he was impertinent, and making vastly too free, and locked himself up in impenetrable sullenness, muttering, that the fellow was a Papist, and a zealot of rebellion; and observed on the bad company so frequently met in public coaches. One of the ladies, with a perfect good humour, having perceived the raillery on the Doctor, archly said, "Come, Mr. Dublin shopkeeper, I'll take a glass of wine with you." Mr. Curran then addressing the Doctor, said, "Sir, it is now time to open your eyes to the genius, manners, and literature of a country, of which your prejudices must for ever keep you chained down in ignorance. Whenever I go with my tapes and threads into the houses of the greatest lords or bishops, or lawyers in Dublin, they converse with me with as much familiarity as these young ladies would do, but for the restraints your presence hath imposed upon them. In England you seem to begin at the wrong end of education, and your logic, sciences, and classics and languages, seem to me to be but half learned, if I am to judge by the specimens you afford."—"What!" said the Doctor hastily, "will you pretend to say, that we do not speak the English purely and correctly?" "I'll tell you what, Doctor, I will bet you the £40 I have here in my pocket, that the two last sentences you have spoken, or the two next you will speak, were not, nor will be Grammar, or pure or correct English: and, Doctor, as to your not speaking your own language with the richness and purity of tone (the brogue), we do, I forgive you that; for it is more your misfortune than your fault; as you had not the good luck to have been born at the right side of the water; and thus, my good Doctor, I leave you." On another occasion he dramatized a country schoolmaster under circumstances nearly similar: possibly even its pleasures may be too much for the present.

Mr. Curran was very national; he entertained a high opinion of the capacity of his countrymen;

and he maintained a continued warfare against English prejudices; and by way of convincing a nation through the medium of one person, he invited Mr. G. to pass some time with him in Ireland: but he found him so unmanageable, and unaccommodating, that they retained their original sentiments on almost every subject perfectly unaltered. They differed on one point. Mr. Curran had the passion of all great souls, the love of fame: he did not reject praise; the other did not like to give it. On a day when some important cause drew forth public expectation, and the courts were uncommonly crowded to hear him, Mr. Curran brought Mr. G. to and from court in his carriage: he was, in their return, in momentary expectation that Mr. G. would open with some eulogy on his speech of that day, and repay, by the cheap generosity of panegyric, what might have been, but probably never was, returned to him in beef and claret; nothing of that kind took place. Wearied with this disappointment, and chilled by the ice bank which neared him, and wishing to dash from this frozen ocean, he touched the subject himself,—it would not do. At length, in a fit of impatience, he asked Mr. G. how he liked the specimen of Irish oratory he had heard that day. The other observed coldly, curtly, and disapprovingly of it. Their days were not numbered long together.

An English gentleman, one of those gossiping *sçavans*, who flutter about society to gather its sweets, having heard that in its capital the vivacity, wit, and learning of Ireland is best met and circulated in abundance and freedom at their tables, in a manner delightful to themselves, and surprizing to strangers, was determined, in gratification of this agreeable propensity, to judge for himself, and, though it were Iceland, to cull its flowers and browze upon its mosses. He accordingly obtained passports of introduction, and was received. The *entré* of this Anacharse was marked by a peculiar misfortune in the first instance; either by a bad selection, or perhaps by accident, he found himself placed at a table not the best calculated to prove the taste of a nation, on the result of that day's conversation. He found among the guests, at one of the city dinners, Mr. Grattan, and he contrived to be seated next him. Much had been said about grinding-stones, razor-blades, rags and ribbons, dinners, lords, and fine ladies: in a situation of this kind, dignity can scarcely sustain itself even by its manners. Amidst the incongruities of *haut-bas* new knights and corporators, all that the gentleman can do is to drink toasts, and writhe in grace:—the flow of the mind is checked, and runs back into a chilly ebb; the sparks of light are smothered as they rise; and when one sees, that to indulge in unrestrained conviviality, dignity should sink into buffoonery, self respect takes the alarm, seeks refuge in silence, submits in arid assentation to cold and unheeded remark, or languishes under the conceits of animalized vivacity, in which the soul has no commerce, sympathy, interest, or elision. The traveller was much disappointed; and seeking an occasion to meet Mr. Curran a few days after at dinner, not apprised of the unbroken intimacy and friendship which politically and privately ever subsisted between those gentlemen, he indiscreetly observed, that he never felt any thing more lowering to Mr. Grattan, than in comparing his great character with himself; that he appeared to possess nothing striking in conversation, and to have exhibited nothing of those extraordinary powers for which he was so celebrated. Mr. Curran started, and replied, "Surely, Sir, you cannot expect that the sun will be always found in its meridian: permit me, however, to ask you where you had the good fortune to have met this gentleman?" On being answered, at a city feast; "Oh, yes: it is very true: I comprehend it perfectly. *Yet*, take my word for it, my good sir, he is still a sweet bird, *though he never sings but in his own climate.*"

The following anecdote does no discredit to any relater, and I think it is to Mr. Curran I am indebted for it. When the French armies got possession of Switzerland, they gasconaded in their usual manner; and, flushed with the insolence of victory, which they never had generosity to enjoy in the pure spirit of valour, some of their officers were parading in a coffee-room at *Basle*, kicking their iron heels, canistering their swords, and swaggering with offensive noises through the coffee-houses. At length one of them was heard to say, "This country is not fit for the Swiss—they are hireling soldiers, and fight for money, while we fight for glory." An old Swiss general mildly raised his head from his newspaper, and calmly replied, "Much of what you say, Sir, is true—*we both fight for what we want.*"

Passing his first summer at Cheltenham, generally inattentive as he was to his dress, he was in a sort of disguise, and little notice being taken of him, and probably not much known, he had resort to a story to draw himself into notice. With the straight forward, credulous character of the English he was perfectly well acquainted, with which he often eked out a tale. The conversation of the table turning altogether on the stupid, savage, and disgusting amusement of cock-fighting, he was determined to put an end to it, by the incredible story of the *Sligo cats.* He prefaced it by saying, that in his country there prevailed a barbarous custom of fighting these animals in the same way as mastiffs are fought in England, or bulls in Spain. That being once in Sligo, a fishing town in the north-west of Ireland, he was invited to see this grand spectacle. That the people of rank and condition in that part of the country had these cats regularly bred and trained for the purpose; and crowded into town, and took lodgings for the week, whenever these games were to be celebrated. The Corinthian chariot-races were never more highly the scenes of gaiety and mirth in Greece, than these were at Sligo. At one of them three matches were fought on the first day with the most furious courage, with all that intrepidity of valour and skill, all that brutal rage, that feudal clans could furnish; and before the third of them was finished (on which bets ran very high), dinner was announced in the inn where the battle was fought. The company agreed, though reluctantly, to return, and

"Let wretches die, that jurors may go dine,"

and to lock up the room, leaving the key in trust to Mr. Curran, who protested to God, he never was so shocked, that his head hung heavy on his shoulders, and his heart was sunk within him, on entering with the company into the room, and finding that the cats had actually eaten each other up, save some little bits of tails which were scattered round the room. The Irish part of the company saw the drift, ridicule, and impossibility of the narrative, and laughed immoderately, while the English part yawned and laughed, seeing others laugh, and sought relief in each other's countenances. One of them not wishing to leave the whole joke to the Irish, and stung by a nettle he had not perceived, turned round to his friends and exclaimed: " Well, Jack, did not I always tell you, mother never liked cats ?" They felt it as a late lord chancellor of great learning, understood some strokes of the Cervantic gravity, and inimitable and unimitated points and turns of Mr. Plunkett*.

Though the frequency of these anecdotes may tend to reduce the dignity of history, and may justly diminish the value of any collection, yet the boldest Goth, not even Alaric himself, would scarcely dare to destroy one vestige of them. By making breaks in the main narrative, one comes relieved from the fatigue of looking on one straight road, on one continuous and interminable line, such as India presents to the traveller.

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* In England, the ruinous system of obtaining money on fictitious bills, is known by the expression of *raising the wind*, in Ireland, by *flying a kite*. This latter, (not understood by the noble lord who presided,) Mr. Plunkett had occasion frequently to use, in animadverting upon its injurious effects : being asked by the judge what he meant by flying a kite, Mr. Plunkett answered, " Your lordship knows, that in England the *wind raises the kite*, but in Ireland, my lord, *the kite raises the wind.*" It is doubtful if this were then, or even after understood.

Five hundred miles, even to Agra, is too much; nor will the stately palm, nor all the spicy odours, nor all the paintings of an oriental scenery impart that delight which the cheerful undulations of hill and vale, alternately intermixed, afford to the eye eagerly seeking for novelty and variety. In one case it sees infinity before it, and pants to be relieved and refreshed from the weariness and disgust produced by continuity. What the acute Hume, and the spoiler of our language the over-ornamented Gibbon, have done, so may the humble recorder of these memoirs be permitted to attempt—to break up his matter so as to give a resting place on each stage.

Socrates said, if any man, however private, had courage to give a true diary of his own history, and of the events which had taken place in all matters connected with him; such would furnish not only an agreeable, but a moral and instructive work. How *he* may succeed who would delineate the mind of another, whether he possesses equal or superior advantages, I stop not to enquire. Locke felt the difficulty the mind had to place itself at a distance from itself, so as justly to estimate its own operations, and it is hard to conceive it to be so circumstanced as to have nothing to conceal. The Grecian philosopher well knew the difficulty of his scheme, which was never capable of being carried into perfect practical effect from the resistance it always met in man's *amour propre*. The confessions of Rousseau did not much advance the suggestions of the Greek sage; in every effort of this nature, it never occurred that the whole truth was told, even by the most candid. When another philosopher was thrown on an island supposed to be inhabited only by savages, and found mathematical figures traced on the sand, he announced to his companions, that this place was peopled by an enlightened race of men: they were at first surprised, but shortly discovered his opinion to be well founded. So when the slightest traits of the human mind are delineated, reason speedily discovers in the most minute shadings, the value of the picture. Even in the small circumstance of tying the bundle of sticks together, and placing the smaller inside, contrivance and intelligence are to be deduced; and were the common newspapers of different countries to be handed down to posterity, unaccompanied by any other vestige, some future Miller from these apparently light documents would deduce the actual state of society, and give to the world an accurate account of its ranks. Thus here are supplied the materials of history, which may produce another and more instructive volume.

Between the spoken and written productions of Mr. Curran, there always appeared a great inequality. The latter were of a much inferior stamp; but if Mr. Addison could pass down to future ages with the merited praise of being the greatest ornament to his own as a writer, and that of being an equally distinguished orator was denied to him, so it may content the ambition of Mr. Curran that his mind was not confined to one track of excellence. To few are given that enlargement, so as to embrace all, or to march at the head of separate grand divisions of intellect. There are many mansions in that house.

The two persons who best combined the extraordinary qualities of great action and of great reflection, belonging to distinct ages and at immense distances, were probably Cicero and Edmund Burke. The elasticity of Mr. Curran's mind was always bounding, when excited by praise or competition. It was early accustomed to admiration; and a crowded theatre, and the vastness of the occasion, drew forth all the energies of his productive mind, and all its best acting and its best exertions, when ignited by his subject, and by these appliances. It was not in the cave of Trophonius, but at Delphi he set forth his oracles.

Such was the food he banqueted upon, and without some of these, his wing soon tired: yet he was but inferior to himself. Without these adventitious aids in his study, he became, comparatively with himself, tame and languid; and though his poetry affords some proofs of taste and marks of genius, it is feared his immortality must rest on some more solid basis. It was in conversation when he was properly in his own climate; when in high tone, and harmonised by fit accompaniments, that he "discoursed most excellent music." Often happiest when his subject was gravest, or when letters, men, taste, past, or passing events were touched. On these topics he entered with a curious felicity, so as to swell the listener's mind to participate in the proud consciousness of human superiority, of which he could be scarcely apprized till he heard him. And whether he courted the mournful muse, or were his even the sallies of gaiety and mirth, such was the *sombre* of his pencil, or such the playfulness and airiness of his imagery; and so surprising were the rapid transitions to the most exquisite comedy, that days and nights passed thus with him were truly in his own phrase (on some other occasion) "the refections of the gods."

His quotations, though frequent, were never pedantic: he melted down the classic sentiment, and it became more pure, and you felt the allusion or illustration in all the freshness of its original force. It was on these occasions his soul resembled a finely-toned instrument, which a rude or clumsy touch flung into disorder: it was the harp which played to the zephyr, and whose wildest were its sweetest notes!

To make a comparison with the ancients,—to presume to say that modern wit or oratory equalled or surpassed that of Athens or of Rome, would be beyond the purpose of this narrative. To assert that all which Congreve wrote,—which Sheridan spoke or wrote,—all which Mr. Curran or Voltaire had ever given to the public, all with which they enriched, cherished, and delighted private social intercourse;—that all these outstripped all the excellences of the Attic and Roman public and private, would be to presume upon a decision, which no one, as I can learn, has ever taken the trouble of bringing solemnly into the field for discussion.

The plays of Terence and Plautus, and of many others among the Romans; and of the celebrated ancient comedy among the Greeks, should with this view be ransacked and culled with great labour, taste, and judgement. It may possibly be, that among the Greeks and Romans may be found those who have surpassed the moderns in pure comedy and in oratory. A Barthelemy's genius could presume to determine that question, but the solution appears to be physically unattainable for want of juxta-position. From not possessing that standard, unconquerable difficulties for ever must impede the enquiry. Beside the unprofitableness of the investigation, the immensity of the research, the variety of idiom, and the topical application of points and turns never to be recovered, and perhaps never to be duly appreciated, fling the hope into despair. Without presuming on any such fearful parallel, take a view of the frequent smart sayings, of the wit and epigram of two of their illustrious men, as retained by Plutarch, "how weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable" are they? How short of the salt and poignancy, and of the grace, of some of those here recorded. And thus it may have been with Shakespear, had not the gigantic and stupendous powers of his genius given a stamp and circulation to the language of his own time, and transfused it into vernacular use. It is by this magic, the humour of Falstaff is now familiar and understood, while the language of Chaucer, of Cowley, and of Spenser, is fallen nearly into disuse.

In the extracts here given, it would be unjust to propose them as exact criterions. In the works of the ancients, the best illustrations will be found more profusely scattered; and many are interspersed in Anacharse, in La Harpe, and in the good writers, critics, and historians of our own country. And lest weariness may attend the repetition even of wit, ancient or modern ; and lest this should swell into the size of a lumpish elegant extract, or assume the shape of an indifferent joke book, I shall be as sparing of these *excerpta*, as the object of their introduction may properly admit*.

The humour of Horace is always agreeable, but Mr. Curran has much more wit, and as a satirist is equally pleasant. As severe as Juvenal, he is at once the comic and the tragic satirist; and when he comes to lash vice, his sentiments are manly and elevated. In cross-examining an old Clergyman whose evasions of truth were disgraceful to him, he closed with this question, "Doctor, when you last put your spectacles in the Bible, give me leave to ask you, did you close it on that passage which says '*Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour?*'"

In Ireland they have a good-natured, familiar, open manner of friendly intercourse, which enters frequently into the most serious and solemn affairs. A gentleman of the age of thirty, about four feet high, and quite a boy in appearance, for want of accommodation in a very crowded court, in the county of Kerry, got into the jury-box. He was very much beloved, and being too low to peep over the box, perched himself on the brawny shoulders of one of the jurors. In the progress of the trial it was observed, that there were thirteen persons in the box. This created some confusion, and it was objected, that it would be a ground to set aside the verdict. Mr. Curran said that, considering the difficulty of the question, the jurors were right in putting as many heads together as they could; but be that as it may, the verdict would not be endangered, for it would be secured by the maxim of the law, which says, "*de minimis non curat lex.*"

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* See extracts from Plutarch in note B.

Of some learned serjeant, who in giving a confused, elaborate, and tedious explanation of some point of law, he observed, that whenever that grave counsellor endeavoured to unfold a principle of law, he put him in mind of a fool whom he once saw struggling for a whole day to open an oyster with a rolling pin.

He said of a busy, bustling, garrulous lawyer, that he always thought him like a counsellor in a play, where all was stage-trick, bustle, or scene-shifting.

The conversation turning one day on the character of Oliver Cromwell, as generally given by Hume, who observes, that Cromwell was a man who, though he had the clearest conceptions of his subject, yet when he came to unfold it in public, he became embarrassed, and the light deserted his mind, some persons controverted Hume's position, holding its opposite, and contending, that whenever the mind had conceived clear ideas, it never could fail in giving clear expression to them, and that the embarrassment in words arose out of the confusion in ideas. Mr. Curran, being of the latter opinion, related in illustration of this, an anecdote of the late Judge Kelly, a gentleman of the old school, and who was as remarkable for his good humour and good manners, as he was for an uncommon degree of natural sagacity.

An action in ejectment had been brought, to recover, on the title, the estate of a Mr. Burke, in the county of Galway, which he and his ancestors had long enjoyed; the plaintiff was a stranger; the jury was composed of persons of the best rank and fortune in the county. Mr. Burke had no legal defence, — every thing was against him. His son, Mr. Urick Burke, was a lawyer, and a gentleman of uncommon pleasantry; apprised of his father's danger, he successfully resorted to his wit to secure the old estate. He addressed the jury at great length, and concluded by observing; "Gentlemen, my father and family were long known to you; you and your fathers were always welcome to their beef and claret; if this stranger gets among you, there is an end to that hospitality; the gates of our castle will be for ever shut against you; and my poor aged father, and our numerous family, will be thrown upon your charity, and that of a merciless world. Will you consent to do all this for a mere stranger, for a person of the name of *Thrustout*,—one who will thrust you all out, if he succeeds in this cause? But, gentlemen, the law and justice are still for us. The learned judge, when he comes to charge you, will tell you that John Thrustout is nobody, a mere fictitious person; but I am bound to warn you, not to be deceived by fiction or lies, they would disgrace the law. The laws of the land are wise, just, and well administered, and they disdain tricks, lies, and *fictions*." The learned judge shortly after charged the jury, and when he came to explain the fiction of the law, that John Thrustout was but a feigned name, he got so confounded and entangled, that the light of his mind forsook him; and the jury taking advantage of this darkness, found a verdict for plaintiff.

With another eminent lawyer, Mr. Curran and other distinguished persons, were invited to dinner at Carleton House. All the other secrets of the conversation at and after dinner, were preserved with the fidelity of a grand jury, or of a privy council, this alone escaped; and the public are indebted for the anecdote to some good-natured friend of the former; for wit, like steam, has an elasticity, which pervades the pores even of crown glass. Lawyers, like other tradesmen, will talk habitually of the ware-room, the shop, and of the labours of the anvil: they too frequently do not distinguish that they, properly, belong to the cast of cultivated gentlemen; yet they cannot always fling off the husk and shell which grows about their profession: they sometimes forget, that the language of the courts is not the language of the drawing-room. Lawyers, either that they cannot or will not condescend to the common use of words, retain this badge of the feudal stock, in all the stiff dress of coats of mail, vizors, &c. &c. The Scottish feudist is likely to be better dressed at all points, in the complete steel of those antiquated phrases, than those of any other nation.

This distinguished orator is said to have mixed with his love of fame, the power of being most declamatory when he spoke on the subject he least knew. It is said, he frequently made self his theme; if so, the taste was bad, and the occasion not fortunately selected. Here, however, he descanted much on the praises of the laws of England; he became another Fortescue, *De laudibus legum Angliæ*. He spoke of them in terms of chivalrous enthusiasm; he said "They were the cheap defence of nations, and that the cultivation of that science which embraced all others, and contained the perfection and sublimity of religion, of morals, and of music, (as Lord Coke said,) held out to its professors a splendid hope of reward, a rich harvest of wealth and honours; and when twined with the garland of eloquence, enabled the younger branches of a noble house to emulate in splendor, magnificence, and pomp of living, the most illustrious of their ancestors." Mr. Curran thought this pretty well, and silence rapidly succeeding to this florid, yet ill-directed piece of interested declamation, he shortly observed, "All that my eloquent friend has so justly and so impressively said, can never be denied; but in enumerating the advantages of the profession of the law, he has omitted one thing, (looking at the Prince, and respectfully bowing to him,) namely, that it has enabled the son of a provincial peasant *to be placed at the table of his prince.*" The remark was too wise for mirth, and the mind paused to make it its own, and hand it over to memory. So pleased was the prince, that he, in speaking next day to some of his Irish friends, on the happy contrast, and in remarking on the modesty of the expression, pleasantly requested of them to account for so rare a quality in an Irishman. They, who had as little occasion to blush for themselves as for their country, assured his royal highness, that the

Irish character was a modest, though a dashing one; with great sensibility to injuries offered to itself or to others, and a quick determination to afford redress, with an uncalculating generosity, regardless of consequences, willing to make splendid sacrifices to the impulse, and very impatient of restraint. One of them said, that Mr. Burke, who studied human nature well, always asserted this, and was often heard to say, that the American was the most, if not the only impudent national character he was acquainted with.

A noble lord, remarkable for convivial wit and talents, told the following anecdote of himself, at Mr. Curran's table, which is given from the relation of a gentleman present. His lordship dining with the Prince of Wales, in company with several persons of distinction, the prince observing that one of the party declined to take his wine, politely urged him to do so; to which the gentleman replied, "Please your Royal Highness, I never take more than two glasses of wine." This, perhaps, would not have been perfectly well-bred in ordinary society; still less so as addressed to such a personage; who, however, turning to the nobleman above mentioned, asked him, how many glasses of wine he was in the habit of taking? When his lordship, (who was an Irish peer,) after a pause, and a little well affected hesitation, said, "Sir, I was apprehensive of giving a rash answer, *for I am not a good accountant.*"

Mr. Curran arrived in London during a summer vacation, after the Irish courts of law had been shut up, and before the sittings of Westminster Hall had been over; he was led by curiosity to hear the most eloquent person of the British bar, with whom he was well acquainted, and was immediately perceived by some lawyer to have taken his seat in court, who communicated it to Mr. ———, by pointing out the celebrated Irish advocate. This drew forth from the former fresh and renewed exertions to be distinguished by Mr. Curran; he, however, was not fortunate, yet when he had ended his speech, he came over to Mr. Curran, shook him by the hand, and after some short preface observed, he had had no preparation, yet conceived it, however, to have been a fine piece of eloquence; to which Mr. Curran replied, "I dare to say you are equally happy on all other occasions."

Sometime after the Union, Mr. Grattan appeared in the imperial parliament; he had been long the rival of Mr. Flood, and he did but justice to that great name, in the generous, elegant, and complimentary prediction, that he was an oak of the forest too old to be transplanted. But Mr. Grattan did not foresee, amidst that experience which had nearly arrived to prophecy, that he himself was to give the first refutation to his own opinion, in his own splendid speech, which, from its novelty of style and manner, the vastness of its conception, its reasoning and its fire, produced in the house surprise and admiration.

The Lawyer before alluded to, anxious to be informed how Mr. Grattan felt on the praises so profusely and so deservedly bestowed on him, asked Mr. Curran, "Was not Mr. Grattan exceedingly elated, and what he felt and said of himself on the occasion?"

Mr. Curran, totally forgetting the person who made the inquiry, inadvertently, indeed rather simply, answered, "Really I cannot say, nor is it in the power of steam to force one expression from him on such a subject, *for he never speaks of himself.*" Mr. Curran, in relating the misfortune of this reply, thus inadvertently given, in one of those curious effusions in conversation, thus describes his own sensations;—"I had scarcely uttered the words, when I was stunned with their own echo; I was like a child playing at the touch-hole of a cannon with a torch, and in an instant shocked with the recoil of his own rashness: indeed, I question if the comparison be not too dignified, too *human* to illustrate the *beastly* misery of my embarrassment. No! I felt more like a poor, worried, half-starved, cowardly turnspit, who after cautiously climbing within a few inches of the top of the kitchen dresser, and almost within reach of the tempting fragments that lay there, suddenly slips upon the range of polished pewter: down headlong tumble, with a frightful dissonance, the dog, and an endless retinue of dishes, plates, ladles, pots, platters, and frying-pans, the crockery ware throwing in a friendly accompaniment; the cook, in the rage of thirst and perspiration, seizes a bason of scalding soup, while her astounded four-footed journeyman, having closely cowered his little apology for a tail, half dead with hunger and apprehension, slinks into the next stew-hole."

The following must also be conceived to be related by Mr. Curran himself:—"The wittiest, most richly comprehensive, and at the same time most admirably appropriate reply I ever made in my life, was to B—. It is rather long and somewhat laboured, but if you will bear with me, I will repeat it all in less than half an hour, by a stop watch. 'My lord chief justice D.' says B. to me one day, with that large plausible eye, glittering in that kind of light which reveals to a shrewd observer that he is quite sure *he has you*, 'my lord chief justice D—, is beyond all comparison, the wittiest companion I have ever known or heard of.' I looked into B.'s eye, and said *hum! It required all his own oil to keep smooth the surface of that face.*"

It was once observed in Mr. Curran's company, that the late Mr. Fox had no relish for broad humour. "I am not sure," said Mr. Curran, "that Fox disliked humour; sometimes, when the Hoyden raillery of my animal spirits has ruffled the plumage of my good manners, when my mirth has turned dancing-master to my veneration, and made it perhaps a little too supple, I have sported playfully in the presence of this slumbering lion, and now and then he condescended to dandle the child. He laughed inwardly. It was not easy to say what Fox would call a *mot*, but when said, I thought I saw a smile rippling over the *fine Atlantic of his countenance.*"

In the senate, and at the bar, Mr. Curran possessed consistency, intrepidity, and integrity: in the former situation he always stood forth as the champion of the people's rights, uncorrupted and immoveable, from the principles he professed. He rejected office at an early period: it is perfectly well known that Lord Kilwarden waited on him, and requested his acceptance of the office of solicitor general, accompanied by all the urgency which his friendship could suggest.

The following fact is well authenticated: Lord Longueville, besides his influence in the city of Cork, was possessed of very considerable parliamentary interest, and conceiving that the talents of Mr. Curran would be a great accession to his strength, he made him the offer of a seat for one of his boroughs, accompanied by some compliment to his abilities, which then began to be universally acknowledged: Mr. Curran's reply was, that he had formed certain principles in politics which happened to be opposite to those of the party which his lordship supported. This objection was answered by a laugh, accompanied by an observation that Mr. Curran had a young family, that his good sense should prevail over the romance of unprofitable patriotism, and thus the conversation ended, without any compact on either side. Mr. Curran thought no more on the subject, till meeting a friend some time after, he jocosely asked him for a frank; the cause of this pleasantry being explained, Mr. Curran for the first time became apprized that he had been returned to parliament for one of Lord Longueville's boroughs; he took his seat accordingly, and voted on the first important question against the minister and the supposed patron. This produced much surprise, and when Mr. Curran was remonstrated with on the occasion, he excused himself by stating, that he came into parliament perfectly independent, and unshackled by any compact or stipulation, and he was determined so to remain. He then had no more money saved up than five hundred pounds; with this sum, and by borrowing from his friends the difference, he purchased a seat for the remainder of the session, and Lord Longueville had the satisfaction of nominating for it a more complying member.

In his situation as a barrister, without any desire to lower the bench, or bring the king's commission into disrespect, he never cowered to any high-handed judge, but maintained the privileges of the bar, or rather of the public, in the representative character of barrister, with all the force of his firmness, and all the spirit which fortitude and the powers of his eloquence could supply. He never shrunk from his duty, and he had to oppose himself single handed, on many lesser, and on some greater occasions, to Lord Clonmell and to Lord Clare, men though of dissimilar characters, yet both very formidable in their different departments.

Lord Clonmell was for many years chief justice of the King's Bench in Ireland, and, from very humble means, had risen to great power and opulence in the state, and was the founder of a great fortune and of a title. Politics widened the dislike mutually entertained, early engendered, and never totally extinguished: the chief justice always had a measure to carry, and was sustained by all the authorities of power: Mr. Curran was among the distinguished leaders of opposition. These circumstances, and some early conflicts at the bar, fixed in both the most rooted animosity: Mr. Curran never yielded.

On one occasion the noble lord was so pressed both by the argument, the eloquence, and the wit of Mr. Curran, that he lost temper, and called on the sheriffs to be ready to take any one into arrest, who would be found so contemptuously presuming to fly in the face of the court. Mr. Curran, perceiving the twittering of a swallow actively in pursuit of flies (for, like as in Nero's court, so, in the presence of this emperor, scarcely a fly was to be found), in his turn called on the sheriffs to take that swallow into arrest, for it was guilty of contempt, as it had contemptuously presumed *to fly in the face of the court*. The ridicule of this, and the peals of laughter which ensued, closed the scene.

On some contested argument in the court of King's Bench, Lord Clonmell, who was said to have a stronger dash of the overbearing than of the brave, stood out against Mr. Curran with a brow-beating vehemence, and shewed a determination to have things entirely in his own way. He made repeated but ineffectual efforts to reduce Mr. Curran, or, (as the phrase is used,) to put him down. He, however, withstood all the violence of those attempts: and in a conflict somewhat resembling the modern description of battles, such as that of Rhoderic Dhu and James Fitz-James, the encounter was upheld with all that passion could supply, or courage hope to extinguish. Mr. Curran looked, and lighted up all the fire of his mighty eye, surveyed his adversary with the most intense and indignant scowl, such as would have pierced through all impediments; while the red and inflamed countenance of the judge, with the menace and attitude of an overwhelming passion, kindled into a burning blaze. With a firm, calm, and measured tone, Mr. Curran addressed him, and whilst he did so, he seemed armed with the bolt of heaven, ready to hurl destruction on his victim. After some prelude he concluded his address in these words: "Does your lordship think I am that silly dog, to bay *that* moon—to bay *that* moon—which I am not able to extinguish?"

But it was in the defence of Hamilton Rowan, the tremendous fire of his artillery was brought to play upon that judge. The powers of invective found in that speech have been seldom surpassed, seldom rivalled. At its delivery, *even the bravest held his breath for the while.* Yet of this master-piece of eloquence, Mr. Curran did not think so highly as of others.

A Jury being sworn, the attorney general stated the case on the part of the crown. The evidence being gone through on both sides:

Mr. *Curran*.—"Gentlemen of the Jury: When I consider the period at which this prosecution is brought forward; when I behold the extraordinary safeguard of armed soldiers resorted to*, no doubt for the preservation of peace and order: when I catch, as I cannot but do, the throb of public anxiety which beats from one end to the other of this hall; when I reflect on what may be the fate of a man of the most beloved personal character, of one of the most respected families of our country; himself the only individual of that family, I may almost say of that country, who can look to that possible fate with unconcern? Feeling, as I do, all these impressions, it is in the honest simplicity of my heart I speak, when I say, that I never rose in a court of justice with so much embarrassment, as upon this occasion.

"If, Gentlemen, I could entertain a hope of finding refuge for the disconcertion of my mind, in the perfect composure of yours; if I could suppose that those aweful vicissitudes of human events, which have been stated or alluded to, could leave your judgements undisturbed and your hearts at ease, I know I should form a most erroneous opinion of your character: I entertain no such chimerical hope; I form no such unworthy opinion; I expect not that your hearts can be more at ease than my own; I have no right to expect it;

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* A few moments before Mr. Curran entered into his client's defence, a guard was brought into the court-house by the sheriff.

but I have a right to call upon you in the name of your country, in the name of the living God, of whose eternal justice you are now administering that portion which dwells with us on this side of the grave, to discharge your breasts as far as you are able of every bias of prejudice or passion; that, if my client be guilty of the offence charged upon him, you may give tranquillity to the public by a firm verdict of conviction; or if he be innocent, by as firm a verdict of acquittal; and that you will do this in defiance of the paltry artifices and senseless clamours that have been resorted to, in order to bring him to his trial with anticipated conviction.

"This paper, Gentlemen, insists upon the necessity of emancipating the Catholics of Ireland, and that is charged as part of the libel. If they had waited another year, if they had kept this prosecution impending for another year, how much would remain for a jury to decide upon, I should be at a loss to discover. It seems as if the progress of public reformation was eating away the ground of the prosecution. Since the commencement of the prosecution, this part of the libel has unluckily received the sanction of the legislature. In that interval our Catholic brethren have obtained that admission, which it seems it was a libel to propose; in what way to account for this, I am really at a loss. Have any alarms been occasioned by the emancipation of our Catholic brethren? Has the bigoted malignity of any individuals been crushed? Or has the stability of the government, or that of the country, been weakened? Or is one million of subjects stronger than four millions? Do you think that the benefit they received should be poisoned by the sting of vengeance? If you think so, you must say to them, "you have demanded emancipation, and you have got it; but we abhor your persons, we are outraged at your success; and we will stigmatise by a criminal prosecution the adviser of that relief which you have obtained from the voice of your country." I ask you, do you think as honest men, anxious for the public tranquillity, conscious that there are wounds not yet completely cicatrized, that you ought to speak this language at this time, to men who are too much disposed to think that in this very emancipation they have been saved from their own parliament by the humanity of their sovereign? Or do you wish to prepare them for the revocation of these improvident concessions? Do you think it wise or humane at this moment to insult them, by sticking up in a pillory the man who dared to stand forth as their advocate? I put it to your oaths; Do you think, that a blessing of that kind, that a victory obtained by justice over bigotry and oppression, should have a stigma cast upon it by an ignominious sentence upon men bold and honest enough to propose that measure? To propose the redeeming of religion from the abuses of the church, the reclaiming of three millions of men from bondage and giving liberty to all who had a right to demand it; giving, I say, in the so much censured words of this paper, giving "UNIVERSAL EMANCIPATION!" I speak in the spirit of the British law, which makes liberty commensurate with, and inseparable from, British soil; which proclaims even to the stranger and the sojourner, the moment he sets his foot upon British earth, that the ground on which he treads is holy, and consecrated by the genius of UNIVERSAL EMANCIPATION. No matter in what language his doom may have been pronounced;—no matter what complexion incompatible with freedom, an Indian or an African sun may have burnt upon him;—no matter in what disastrous battle his liberty may have been cloven down;—no matter with what solemnities he may have been devoted upon the altar of slavery; the first moment he touches the sacred soil of Britain, the altar and the God sink together in the dust; his soul walks abroad in her own majesty; his body swells beyond the measure of his chains, that burst from around him, and he stands redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled, by the irresistible Genius of UNIVERSAL EMANCIPATION."

[Here Mr. Curran was interrupted by a sudden burst of applause from the court and hall, which was repeated for a considerable length of time. Silence being at length restored, he proceeded:]

" And, permit me to say, that if my client had occasion to defend his cause by any mad or drunken appeals to extravagance or licentiousness, I trust in God I stand in that situation, that, humble as I am, he would not have resorted to me to be his advocate. I was not recommended to his choice by any connection of principle or party, or even private friendship; and, saying this, I cannot but add, that I consider not to be acquainted with such a man as Mr. Rowan, a want of personal good fortune. But upon this great subject of reform and emancipation, there is a latitude and boldness of remark, justifiable in the people, and necessary to the defence of Mr. Rowan, for which the habits of professional studies and technical adherence to established forms, have rendered me unfit. It is, however, my duty, standing here as his advocate, to make some few observations to you, which I conceive to be material.

" The people are always strong; the public chains can only be rivetted by the public hands. Look to those devoted regions of Southern despotism; behold the expiring victim on his knees, presenting the javelin reeking with his blood to the ferocious monster who returns it into his heart. Call not that monster the tyrant: he is no more than the executioner of that inhuman tyranny, which the people practise upon themselves, and of which he is only reserved to be a later sinks with it, in one common grave, the liberty of the subject and the security of the crown.

"Gentlemen, I am glad that this question has not been brought forward earlier; I rejoice for the sake of the court, of the jury, and of the public repose, that this question has not been brought forward till now. In Great Britain analogous circumstances have taken place. At the commencement of that unfortunate war which has deluged Europe with blood, the spirit of the English people was tremblingly alive to the terror of French principles; at that moment of general paroxysm, to accuse was to convict. The danger loomed larger to the public eye, from the misty medium through which it was surveyed. We measure inaccessible heights by the shadows which they project; where the lowness and the distance of the light form the length of the shade.

"There is a sort of aspiring and adventurous credulity, which disdains assenting to obvious truths, and delights in catching at the improbability of circumstances, as its best ground of faith. To what other cause, Gentlemen, can you ascribe that in the wise, the reflecting, and the philosophic nation of Great Britain, a printer has been gravely found guilty of a libel, for publishing those resolutions, to which the present minister of that kingdom had actually subscribed his name? To what other cause can you ascribe, what in my mind is still more astonishing, in such a country as Scotland —a nation cast in the happy medium between the spiritless acquiescence of submissive poverty, and the sturdy credulity of pampered wealth; cool and ardent; adventurous and persevering; winning her eagle flight against the blaze of every science, with an eye that never winks, and a wing that never tires; crowned, as she is, with the spoils of every art, and decked with the wreath of every muse; from the deep and scrutinising researches of her Humes, to the sweet and simple, but not less sublime and pathetic morality of her Burns —how from the bosom of a country like that, genius, and character, and talents, should be banished to a distant barbarous soil*; condemned to pine under the horrid communion of vulgar vice and base-born profligacy, for twice the period that ordinary calculation gives to the continuance of human life?

"Gentlemen, let me suggest another observation or two, if still you have any doubt, as to the guilt or innocence of the defendant. Give me leave to suggest to you, what circumstances you ought to consider, in order to found your verdict. You should consider the character of the person accused; and in this your task is easy. I will venture to say, there is not a man in this nation more known than the Gentleman who is the subject of this prosecution, not only by the part he has taken in public concerns, and which he has taken in common with many, but still more so, by that extraordinary sympathy for human affliction, which, I am sorry to think, he shares with so small a number. There is not a day that you hear the cries of your starving manufacturers in your streets, that you do not also see the advocate of their sufferings—that you do not see his honest and manly figure, with uncovered head, soliciting for their relief; searching the frozen heart of charity for every string that can be touched by compassion; and urging the force of every argument and every motive, save that which his modesty suppresses—the authority of his own generous example. Or if you see him not there, you may trace his steps to the private abode of disease and famine and despair; the messenger of Heaven, bearing with him food and medicine and consolation. Are these the materials, of which you suppose anarchy and public rapine to be formed? Is this the man, on whom to fasten the abominable charge of goading on a frantic populace to mutiny and bloodshed? Is this the man likely to apostatise from every principle that can bind him to the state; his birth, his property, his education, his character, and his children? Let me tell you, Gentlemen of the Jury, if you agree with his prosecutors, in thinking that there ought to be a sacrifice of such a man, on such an occasion; and upon the credit of such evidence, you are to convict him—never did you, never can you give a sentence, consigning any man to public punishment with less danger to his person or to his fame! For where could the hireling be found to fling contumely or ingratitude at his head, whose private distresses he had not laboured to alleviate, or whose public condition he had not laboured to improve?

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*Mr. Curran alludes to the sentence of transportation passed in Scotland upon Mr. Muir, &c. &c.

"I cannot, however, avoid adverting to a circumstance that distinguishes the case of Mr. Rowan, from that of a late sacrifice in a neighbouring kingdom.*

"The severer law of that country, it seems, and happy for them that it should, enables them to remove from their sight the victim of their infatuation. The more merciful spirit of our law deprives you of that consolation; his sufferings must remain for ever before our eyes, a continual call upon your shame and your remorse. But those sufferings will do more; they will not rest satisfied with your unavailing contrition, they will challenge the great and paramount inquest of society: the man will be weighed against the charge, the witness, and the sentence; and impartial justice will demand, why has an Irish Jury done this deed? The moment he ceases to be regarded as a criminal, he becomes of necessity an accuser: and let me ask you, what can your most zealous defenders be prepared to answer to such a charge? When your sentence shall have sent him forth to that stage, which guilt alone can render infamous; let me tell you, he will not be like a little statue upon a mighty pedestal, diminishing by elevation; but he will stand a striking and imposing object upon a monument, which, if it does not, (and it cannot,) record the atrocity of his crime, must record the atrocity of his conviction. Upon this subject, therefore, credit me when I say, that I am still more anxious for you, than I can possibly be for him. I cannot but feel the peculiarity of your situation. Not the jury of his own choice, which the law of England allows, but which ours refuses: collected in that box by a person, certainly no friend to Mr. Rowan, certainly not very deeply interested in giving him a very impartial jury. Feeling this, as I am persuaded you do, you cannot be surprised, however you may be distressed at the mournful presage, with which an anxious public is led to fear the worst from your possible determination. But I will not, for the justice and honour of our common country, suffer my mind to be borne away by such melancholy anticipation. I will not relinquish the confidence that this day will be the period of his sufferings; and however mercilessly he has been hitherto pursued, that your verdict will send him home to the arms of his family, and the wishes of his country. But if, which Heaven forbid, it hath still been unfortunately determined, that because he has not bent to power and authority, because he would not bow down before the golden calf and worship it, he is to be bound and cast into the furnace; I do trust in God, that there is a redeeming spirit in the constitution, which will be seen to walk with the sufferer through the flames, and to preserve him unhurt by the conflagration."

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* Scotland, from whence Mr. Muir, Palmer, and others, were transported for sedition.

Upon the conclusion of this speech Mr. Curran was again for many minutes loudly applauded by the auditors; and upon leaving the court was drawn home by the populace, who took the horses from his carriage.

Undismayed by power, his course was still unbroken; between Lord Clare and him there existed an unextinguishable animosity; it began in the hall, and did not end in the field—they fought at an early period, and Lord Clare declared on the ground, after one fire, that he had satisfied his own honour; yet that did not diminish the odium, *in longum jacens*, it remained in their minds.

"And gath'ring their wrath like gath'ring storm,
"They nurs'd their wrath to keep it warm."

Of the two it is thought Mr. Curran was more inclined to forget, but the temperament of Lord Clare was not so manageable.

Mr. Curran's business rapidly declined in the court of Chancery, and fell off to the loss of many thousand pounds, for some years; in truth, he never after recovered it. The discouragement he then met in that court, for which he conceived himself best fitted, was marked by the agents, who would not hazard the great concerns of their clients with an unfavoured, and ill-attended-to advocate. They thought they read in the countenance of the Lord Chancellor, that which never should have been there; that which never yet was observed in his present noble successor; and what was said on a warmer subject by the Scotch poet, who frequently applied to Lord Clare,—with what truth I presume not to say:

"For who could bear the scorn of his ee;
"'Twas black, jet black, and like a Hawke;
"And wunna let a body be."

These causes wound up all the angry passions, and the soul of Mr. Curran blackened into the resolve of death or victory. The fortunes and fame of one person must fall; and in this strong state of phrenzied irritation, an occasion presenting itself, Mr. Curran was determined to sacrifice even life itself to the keen appetite of his revenge. His arrow was new feathered and pointed, and poisoned. To this maddened state of indignation do we owe one of the finest pieces of invective he ever uttered. It was delivered in the case of Alderman Howison, before the privy council, and is preserved among his public speeches. Whatever may be the merit of these productions, probably very loosely reported among his speeches; whatever opinion future times may affix to them; however harshly or justly the reviewers may have treated them, their effect was surprising; and jurors were afraid to trust themselves to the magic of his address. Let their merits, like the birthplace of Homer, be for ever disputed; yet all who were brought within the range of them, or of the natural circle of his society, agree, that at the festive board, or in the disengaged intercourses of life, as well as in some of those speeches, no other living man possessed equal powers of conversation or of persuasion, or was more gifted with every capability, with which to astonish and delight.

The following extracts are taken from the Speech of John Philpot Curran, Esq. on the Right of Election of Lord Mayor of the City of Dublin, delivered before the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council of Ireland, 1790.

"Our ancestors must, therefore, have been sensible that the enslaved state of the corporation of the metropolis was a mischief that extended its effects to the remotest borders of the island.—In the confederated strength and the united councils of great cities, the freedom of a country may find a safeguard which extends itself even to the remote inhabitant who never put his foot within their gates.

"But, my lords, how must these considerations have been enforced by a view of Ireland, as a connected country, deprived, as it was, of almost all the advantages of an hereditary monarchy; the father of his people residing at a distance, and the paternal beam reflected upon his children through such a variety of *mediums*, sometimes too languidly to warm them; sometimes so intensely as to consume; a succession of governors differing from one another in their tempers, in their talents, and in their virtues, and of course in their systems of administration; unprepared in general for rule by any previous institution, and utterly unacquainted with the people they were to govern, and with the men through whose agency they were to act. Sometimes, my lords, 'tis true, a rare individual has appeared among us, as if sent by the bounty of Providence in compassion to human miseries, marked by that dignified simplicity of manly character, which is the mingled result of an enlightened understanding and an elevated integrity; commanding a respect that he laboured not to inspire; and attracting a confidence which it was impossible he could betray*. It is but eight years, my lords, since we have seen such a man amongst us, raising a degraded country from the condition of a province, to the rank and consequence of a people, worthy to be the ally of a mighty empire; forming the league that bound her to Great Britain, on the firm and honourable basis of equal liberty and a common fate, "standing and falling with the British nation," and thus stipulating for that freedom which alone contains the principle of her political life, in the covenant of her fœderal connexion. But how short is the continuance of those auspicious gleams of public sunshine! how soon are they passed, and perhaps for ever! In what rapid and fatal revolution has Ireland seen the talents and the virtues of such men give place to a succession of sordid parade and empty pretension, of bloated promise and lank performance, of austere hypocrisy and peculating economy*! Hence it is, my lords, that the administration of Ireland so often presents to the reader of her history, not the view of a legitimate government, but rather of an encampment in the country of a barbarous enemy; where the object of the invader is not government but conquest; where he is of course obliged to resort to the corrupting of clans, or of single individuals, pointed out to his notice by public abhorrence, and recommended to his confidence only by a treachery so rank and consummate, as precludes all possibility of their return to private virtue or to public reliance, and therefore only put into authority over a wretched country, condemned to the torture of all that petulant unfeeling asperity, with which a narrow and malignant mind will bristle in unmerited elevation; condemned to be betrayed, and disgraced, and exhausted by the little traitors that have been suffered to nestle and to grow within it, making it at once the source of their grandeur, and the victim of their vices, reducing it to the melancholy necessity of supporting their consequence, and of sinking under their crimes, like the lion perishing by the poison of a reptile that finds shelter in the mane of the noble animal, while it is stinging him to death.

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* The Duke of Portland, under whose administration Ireland obtained a free constitution.

† The Duke of Rutland and Marquis of Buckingham quickly followed his grace. The first was marked by a love of dissipation and undignified extravagance. The Marquis, upon his arrival in Ireland, led the country to expect a general retrenchment in the public expenses. This expectation was terminated by the

"By such considerations as these, my lords, might the makers of this statute have estimated the danger to which the liberty of Ireland was exposed; and of course the mischief of having that metropolis enslaved, by whose independency alone those dangers might be averted. But in this estimate they had much more than theory, or the observation of foreign events to shew them, that the rights of the sove-

creation of fourteen new places for the purpose of parliamentary influence, countervailed indeed by a curtailment of the fuel allowed to the old soldiers of the royal hospital by the public bounty, and by abortive speculations upon the practicability of making one pair of boots serve for two troopers.

reign and of the subject were equally embarked in a common fate with that independency. When in the latter part of the reign of queen Anne, an infernal conspiracy was formed by the then chancellor (Sir Constantine Phipps) and the privy council, to defeat that happy succession which for three generations hath shed its auspicious influence upon these realms, they commenced their diabolical project with an attack upon the corporate rights of the citizens of Dublin, by an attempt to impose a disaffected lord mayor upon them, contrary to the law. Fortunately, my lords, this wicked conspiracy was defeated by the virtue of the people. I will read to your lordships the resolutions of a committee of the House of Commons on the subject.

"1st. Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, that soon after the arrival of Sir Constantine Phipps, late lord chancellor, and one of the lords justices in this kingdom, in the year 1710, a design was formed and carried on to subvert the constitution and freedom of elections of magistrates of corporations within the new rules, in order to procure persons to be returned for members of parliament, disaffected to the settlement of the crown on his majesty and his royal issue.

"2d. Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, that in pursuance of that design, indirect and illegal methods were taken to subvert the ancient and legal course of electing magistrates in the city of Dublin.

"3d. Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, that the said Sir Constantine Phipps, and those engaged in that evil design, in less than five months, in the year 1711, procured six aldermen, duly elected lord mayors, and fourteen substantial citizens, duly elected sheriffs, and well known to be zealously affected to the Protestant succession, and members of the established church, to be disapproved; on pretence that alderman Robert Constantine, as senior alderman who had not been mayor, had a right to be elected lord mayor.

"4th. Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, that the senior alderman who had not served as mayor, had not any right by charter, usage, or by law in force in the city of Dublin, as such, to be elected lord mayor.

"5th. Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, that the said Sir Constantine Phipps, and his accomplices, being unable to support the pretended right of seniority, did, in the year 1713, set up a pretended custom or usage for the mayor in being, to nominate three persons to be in election for lord mayor, one of whom the aldermen were obliged to choose lord mayor."

Lord Chancellor.—"Can you think, Mr. Curran, that these resolutions of a committee of the House of Commons, can have any relation whatsoever to the present subject?"

Mr. Curran.—"I hope, my lords, you will think they have much relation indeed to the subject before you. The weakness of the city was the mischief which occasioned the act of parliament in question; to give the city strength, was the remedy. You must construe the law so as to suppress the former, and advance the latter. What topics then, my lords, can bear so directly upon the point of your inquiry, as the perils to be apprehended from that weakness, and the advantages to be derived from that strength? What argument then can be so apposite, as that which is founded on undeniable facts? Or what authority so cogent as the opinion of the representative wisdom of the nation, pronounced upon those facts, and transmitted to posterity upon record? On grounds like these, for I can conceive no other, do I suppose the rights of the city were defended, in the time to which I have alluded; for it appears by the records which I have read, that the city was then heard by her counsel; she was not denied the form of defence, though she was denied the benefit of the law. In this very chamber did the chancellor and judges sit, with all the gravity and affected attention to arguments in favour of that liberty and those rights which they had conspired to destroy. But to what end, my lords, offer arguments to such men? A little and a peevish mind may be exasperated, but how shall it be corrected by refutation? How fruitless would it have been to represent to that wretched chancellor, that he was betraying those rights which he was sworn to maintain, that he was involving a government in disgrace, and a kingdom in panic and consternation; that he was violating every sacred duty, and every solemn engagement that bound him to himself, his country, his sovereign, and his God! Alas, my lords, by what argument could any man hope to reclaim or to dissuade a mean, illiberal, and unprincipled minion of authority, induced by his profligacy to undertake, and bound by his avarice and vanity to persevere? He would probably have replied to the most unanswerable arguments, by some curt, contumelious, and unmeaning apophthegm, delivered with the fretful smile of irritated self-sufficiency and disconcerted arrogance; or even, if he could be dragged by his fears to a consideration of the question, by what miracle could the pigmy capacity of a stunted pedant be enlarged to a reception of the subject? The endeavour to approach it would have only removed him to a greater distance than he was before, as a little hand that strives to grasp a mihgty globe, is thrown back by the re-action of its own effort to comprehend. It may be given to an Hale, or an Hardwicke, to discover and retract a mistake; the errors of such men are only specks that arise for a moment upon the surface of a splendid luminary; consumed by its heat, or irradiated by its light, they soon purge and disappear; but the perversenesses of a mean and narrow intellect, are like the excrescences that grow upon a body naturally cold and dark; no fire to waste them, and no ray to enlighten, they assimilate and coalesce with those qualities so congenial to their nature, and acquire an incorrigible permanency in the union with kindred frost and kindred opacity. Nor indeed, my lords, except where the interest of millions can be affected by the folly or the vice of an individual, need it be much regretted, that to things not worthy of being made better, it hath not pleased Providence to afford the privilege of improvement."

Lord Chancellor.—"Surely, Mr. Curran, a gentleman of your eminence in your profession, must see that the conduct of former privy councils has nothing to do with the question before us. The question lies in the narrowest compass; it is merely whether the commons have a right of arbitrary and capricious rejection, or are obliged to assign a reasonable cause for their disapprobation. To that point you have a right to be heard, but I hope you do not mean to lecture the council *."

Mr. Curran.—"I mean, my lords, to speak to the case of my clients, and to avail myself of every topic of defence which I conceive applicable to that case. I am not speaking to a dry point of law, to a single judge, and on a mere forensic subject; I am addressing a very large auditory, consisting of co-ordinate members, of whom the far greater number is not versed in law; were I to address such an audience on the interests and rights of a great city, and address them in the hackneyed style of a pleader, I should make a very idle display of profession, with very little information to those that I address, or benefit to those on whose behalf I have the honour to be heard. I am aware, my lords, that truth is to be sought only by slow and painful progress; I know also that error is in its nature flippant and compendious, it hops with airy and fastidious levity over proofs and arguments, and perches upon assertion, which it calls conclusion."

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* From the frequent interruptions experienced by Mr. Curran in this part of his speech, it would appear that Lord Clare perceived that the description of Sir Constantine Phipps was intended for himself. Those who best knew his lordship can judge of the justness of the representation.

[Here the Lord Chancellor moved to have the chamber cleared; after some time the doors were opened*.]

"My lords, I was regretting the necessity which I am under of trespassing so much on that indulgent patience with which I feel I am so honoured; let me not, however, my lords, be thought so vainly presumptuous, as to suppose that condescension bestowed merely upon me; I feel, how much more you owe it to your own dignity and justice, and to a full conviction that you could not be sure of deciding with justice, if you did not hear with temper.

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* During the exclusion of strangers, it was understood that Lord Clare moved the council, that Mr. Curran should be restrained by their lordships' authority from proceeding further in that line of argument he was then pursuing; but his lordship being overruled, Mr. Curran proceeded.

"As to my part, my lords, I am aware that no man can convince by arguments which he cannot clearly comprehend, and make clearly intelligible to others; I consider it therefore, not only an honour, but an advantage, to be stopped when I am not understood. So much confidence have I in the justice of my cause, that I wish any noble lord in this assembly would go with me, step by step, through the argument; one good effect would inevitably result, I should either have the honour of convincing the noble lord, or the public would, by my refutation, be satisfied they are in the wrong: with this wish, and if I may presume to say so, with this hope, I will proceed to a further examination of the subject."

The following furnishes an illustration of the rapid transition of Mr. Curran's mind from the grave and serious, to the witty and the ludicrous: it will be found in the same speech:

"But, my lords, it seems all these defects in point of accusation, of defence, of trial, and of judgement, as the ingenious gentlemen have argued, are cured by the magical virtue of those beans, by whose agency the whole business must be conducted.

"If the law had permitted a single word to be exchanged between the parties, the learned counsel confess that much difficulty might arise in the events which I have stated; but they have found out that all these difficulties are prevented or removed by the beans and the ballot. According to these gentlemen, we are to suppose one of those unshaven demagogues, whom the learned counsel have so humorously described, rising in the commons when the name of alderman James is sent down; he begins by throwing out a torrent of seditious invective against the servile profligacy and liquorish venality of the board of aldermen—this he does by beans*; having thus previously inflamed the passions of his fellows, and somewhat exhausted his own, his judgement collects the reins that floated on the neck of his imagination, and he becomes grave, compressed, sententious, and didactic; he lays down the law of personal disability, and corporate criminality, and corporate forfeiture, with great precision, with sound emphasis and good discretion, to the great delight and edification of the assembly—and this he does by beans. He then proceeds, my lords, to state the specific charge against the unfortunate candidate for approbation, with all the artifice and malignity of accusation, scalding the culprit in tears of affected pity, bringing forward the blackness of imputed guilt through the varnish of simulated commiseration; bewailing the horror of his crime, that he may leave it without excuse; and invoking the sympathy of his judges, that he may steel them against compassion—and this, my lords, the unshaved demagogue doth by beans. The accused doth not appear in person, for he cannot leave his companions, nor by attorney, for his attorney could not be admitted, but he appears and defends by beans. At first, humble and deprecatory, he conciliates the attention of his judges to his defence, by giving them to hope that it may be without effect; he does not alarm them by any indiscreet assertion that the charge is false, but he slides upon them arguments to shew it improbable; by degrees, however, he gains upon the assembly, and denies and refutes, and recriminates and retorts—all by beans;—until at last he challenges his accuser to a trial, which is accordingly had; in the course of which the depositions are taken, the facts tried, the legal doubts proposed and explained—by beans; and in the same manner the law is settled, with an exactness and authority that remains a record of jurisprudence for the information of future ages; while at the same time, the 'harmony' of the metropolis is attuned by the marvellous temperament of jarring discord; and the 'good will' of the citizens is secured by the indissoluble bond of mutual crimination and reciprocal abhorrence.

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* A common mode of election in Ireland.

"By this happy mode of decision, one hundred and forty-six causes of rejection (for of so many do the commons consist, each of whom must be entitled to allege a distinct cause,) are tried in the course of a single day, with satisfaction to all parties.

"With what surprise and delight must the heart of the fortunate inventor have glowed, when he discovered those wonderful instruments of wisdom and of eloquence, which, without being obliged to commit the precious extracts of science or persuasion to the faithless and fragile vehicles of words or phrases, can serve every process of composition or abstraction of ideas, and every exigency of discourse or argumentation, by the resistless strength and infinite variety of beans, white or black, or boiled, or raw; displaying all the magic of their powers in the mysterious exertions of dumb investigation and mute discussion, of speechless objection and tongue-tied refutation!

"Nor should it be forgotten, my lords, that this notable discovery does no little honour to the sagacity of the present age, by explaining a doubt that has for so many centuries perplexed the labour of philosophic inquiry, and furnishing the true reason why the pupils of Pythagoras were prohibited the use of beans; it cannot, I think, my lords, be doubted, that the great author of the metempsychosis found out, that those mystic powers of persuasion which vulgar naturalists supposed to remain lodged in minerals or fossils, had really transmigrated into beans; and he could not, therefore, but see that it would have been fruitless to preclude his disciples from mere oral babbling, unless he had also debarred them from the indulgence of vegetable loquacity."

Such was the effect of Mr. Curran's pleasantry, that even on ordinary occasions, servants in attending at table often became suspended, like the bucket in the well; and frequently started as if from a reverie, when called upon for the ordinary attendance. Sometimes a wine glass could not be had, or if asked for, a knife or fork was presented in its place; their faces turned awry, you heard nothing but the breaks of a suppressed laughter.

He had a favourite black servant who lived with him for many years, and to whom, for his great fidelity, Mr. Curran was very much attached. This poor fellow was observed for a few days before his departure, to have been oppressed with gloom and sadness, the cause of which was not directly enquired into. One morning, whilst in this state, he came up anxiously to his master, and with apparent regret and an air of much dejection requested to be discharged. Mr. Curran told him he was very much concerned to lose the services of so faithful a person, that he had a strong regard for him; and on enquiring into the reason of his desire to leave him, the black replied, "it is impossible for me to remain longer with you, massa." "Why, my good fellow, we will see all care taken of you." "No massa, I cannot live longer with you, I am losing my health with you, you make a me laugh too much."

A brother barrister of his, remarkable for having a perpetuity in dirty shirts, was drily asked in the presence of Mr. Curran, "Pray, my dear Bob, how do you get so many dirty shirts?" Mr. Curran replied for him, "I can easily account for it; his laundress lives at Holyhead, and there are nine packets always due." This gentleman wishing to travel to Cork during the rebellion, but apprehensive he should be known by the rebels, was advised to proceed *incog.* which he said was easily effected, for by disguising himself in a clean shirt, no one would know him.

Of the same gentleman, who was a sordid miser, it was told Mr. Curran, that he had set out from Cork to Dublin, with one shirt, and one guinea. "Yes," said Mr. Curran, "and I will answer for it, he will change neither of them till he returns."

On travelling into London once, he was told of a builder, who had erected a row of houses, on so cheap a principle, that one of the evils likely to arise out of his œconomy was, that if one was touched or altered, the remainder, like card houses, would immediately fall. A tenant to one of the houses, getting tired of his bargain, and wishing to put a little money into his pocket, ordered masons and other tradesmen to be ready to pull down part of the house inhabited by him. The landlord ran impatiently to remonstrate with, and to obstruct him if possible, and it ended in a money settlement, as the tenant calculated. "What a scoundrel!" exclaimed some fellow traveller. "No, Sir, by no means," said Mr. Curran, "he took the money by the oldest title known to your country, he took by the law of *descent*, and he brings to my recollection what I once heard of a cobler, who rented out the leg of a stool."

On letting his beautiful and tasty residence in the county of Cork, which was distant from the Lakes of Killarney but one short day's journey, he became the purchaser of a country-seat near Rathfarnham, on the slope of those delightful hills hanging over the Marquis of Ely's demesne. The scenery before the windows is of interminable expanse, and commanding one of the richest and best dressed landscapes in Ireland, including the Bay of Dublin, the ships, the opposite hill of Howth, the pier, and light-house, and a long stretch of the county of Dublin; on the eastern side May-puss Craggs and obelisks, and a long range of hills. The house is plain, but substantial, and the grounds peculiarly well laid out, and neatly kept; sheltered to the south by a ridge of mountains; and though its elevation is considerable and commanding, it is relatively a plain or flattening on the mountain's side; its prospects are delightful. It was, as he said, a *toilette*, at which one might dress and shave for eternity. Situated about four miles from Dublin, and a sort of centre between the seats of his friend Mr. Grattan in the county of Wicklow, and the late Mr. George Ponsonby in the county of Kildare, and about eight miles from each.

The country surrounding it is enchanting, and the neighbourhood populous and good. Within the short distance of two miles on the city side, was Lord Avonmore's seat of Fortfield, the residence of the present Master of the Rolls, Sir William M'Mahon. The houses of many other gentlemen of his friendship and of his profession were thickly crowded round him. Here it was he chose to pass in study, or in society, those hours which were not devoted to business; and here he generally entertained his friends. He brought nothing from his former country residence but its name, (the Priory). His table was frugal; plain, yet comfortable; but his wines were the best and choicest, in which he did not generally more indulge, than in the ordinary manner of a gentleman. His deviations from sobriety were not frequent, and made but exceptions to his usual habits of temperance. Here it was, like

Achilles in his tent, he delighted his heart with his harp; the violoncello was his instrument, and from this he did not desire reputation for skill in that delightful art. He sought no more than to feel the pleasure it imparted; nor am I apprized that he ever aspired to the glory of exhibiting even at a concert. An Irish giant used to come from the mountains to play upon it, and said it was the biggest fiddle he ever met; but that it was very awkward with but three strings, for so he sometimes found it.

Here also it was that he composed much more than as yet has met the eye. Still it may be hoped, that a criticism of Milton's Paradise Lost may survive the wreck of works which a fastidious and refined taste may have too rapidly condemned. Leisure and revision may give a finish which may not satisfy himself, yet the efforts of such a mind, however carelessly flung off, must always be gratifying to curiosity.

At his dinners two peculiarities appeared: one constantly, that of having dinner served to the minute of five o'clock. This was frequently inconvenient to others, but as he defined a good dinner to be two dishes and five o'clock, it sometimes occurred, that there were no other terms to be included in this definition. He drank a few glasses of port at dinner, "to keep," as he said, "the wet of the claret out of his stomach." The second peculiarity was, that you frequently met at his table persons seldom undistinguished, though often unknown to each other. And in this he often resembled his friend John Horne Tooke, who at his feasts at Wimbledon had persons of all tongues, nations, characters, and qualities. His own habits were plain and frugal, though the pomp and parade of good living did not appal him. He sustained through life a preference of the comforts to the luxuries of the table. *Liqueurs* being served after dinner, noyeau, persico, and every thing *recherché*; malmsey, Madeira, hock, &c. Mr. Curran being asked which he would prefer, seized a bottle of the latter, and said, *Hoc erat in votis.* A young gentleman who sat near him observed that the *liqueurs* were much better, and importunately recommended persico, adding that he who was fond of the *Medes,* should love the Persians also: to which Mr. Curran instantly replied, *Persicos odi puer.*

It was in this neighbourhood, and in the surrounding society of Dublin, all that was precious in the genius of this country; all it could collect was occasionally brought together; and the image of it is preserved in one of those speeches which Mr. Curran, to soften down some differences between him and that illustrious man, Lord Chief Baron Avonmore, has, with such admirable art, with such successful skill, spread upon the canvass in all the glowing colours of a master.

Lord Avonmore was one of the brightest ornaments of his country; to a masculine understanding, immense capacity, great and profound learning, he added a powerful wit, and an overwhelming eloquence. His wit, though not so frequently exercised as Mr. Curran's, yet was a gem of the first water. A great susceptibility in his temperament subjected him to great gusts of impatience. Mr. Curran, with intent to cure his friend of this imperfection, and also to relieve himself from its effects, coming one day rather late to dinner, to shelter himself from the storm which he found gathering about him, observed on entering the room, that he was delayed by a melancholy circumstance which took place in Clarendon market, through which he was passing. It was a butcher and a child; the butcher with a bloody knife— Lord Avonmore could not be patient; his extreme feeling took the alarm. "What," he exclaimed, "my God! has the villain murdered the child? Oh good heavens!" His feelings were so wound up, that he, by this dreadful anticipation, had neither eye nor ear. He at length perceived a laugh in the room, and looking at Mr. Curran, "What! did you not say that the butcher had stabbed the infant to the heart?" "No, my Lord, I said he plunged the bloody blade into the throat of a pig."

A lawyer pleading before Lord Avonmore, having to oppose some principles urged against him on the authority of Judge Blackstone, treated the works of that great commentator in terms of disrespect; at which Lord Avonmore was so provoked, that he instantly burst forth into the following beautiful compliment to that eminent writer: "He first gave to the law the air of science; he found it a skeleton, and clothed it with flesh, colour, and complexion; he embraced the cold statue, and by his touch it grew into life, sense, and beauty. His great works survive the vagaries which pass through the crude minds of each giddy innovator, and which every packet imports in the form of a blue paper report."

When the late Sir Michael Smith, afterwards Master of the Rolls, was at bar, though a lawyer of great talents, yet his manner was so cold, that any glow of warmth was little expected from him. As a member of the House of Commons, he distinguished himself in the debate on the bill for preventing and annulling marriages between Protestants and Catholics. On that occasion he delivered a speech abounding in elegance and warmth, and dwelt on the alluring topics of love, beauty, and conjugal felicity, and most happily contrasted them with a law at once unnatural, cruel, and unjust, and which precluded the intermarriage of subjects of the same country, of the same king, and worshippers of the same deity. This excited the admiration of all who heard him, and shewed that the frost of the logician had not extinguished the fire of the patriot, nor the genial sentiments of the lover. Lord Avonmore, who had heard him, observed, "If the genial sun-beams shed summer even upon Saturn, revive torpidity, and teach the cold of the poles to relent; is it wonderful that the united glow of patriotism and native beauty should melt logic into poetry, and stoicism into love?"

Of the veneration in which that noble Lord was held by Mr. Curran the Speech in the case of Judge Johnson will afford the best proof.

The following is extracted from the Speech of Mr. Curran, in the cause of the King against the Hon. Mr. Justice Johnson, in the Court of Exchequer, Dublin, February 4th, 1805.

"I cannot but observe the sort of scenic preparation with which this sad drama is sought to be brought forward. In part I approve it: in part it excites my *disgust* and *indignation.* I am glad to find that the attorney and solicitor general, the natural and official prosecutors for the state, do not appear: and I infer from the absence, that his excellency the lord lieutenant disclaims any personal concern in this execrable transaction. I think it does him much honour; it is a conduct that equally agrees with the dignity of his character and the feelings of his heart. To his private virtues, whenever he is left to their influence, I willingly concur in giving the most unqualified tribute of respect. And I do firmly believe, it is with no small regret that he suffers his name to be even formally made use of, in avowing for a return of one of the judges of the land with as much indifference and *nonchalance* as if he were a beast of the plough. I observe, too, the dead silence into which the public is frowned by authority for the sad occasion. No man dares to mutter; no newspaper dares to whisper that such a question is afloat. It seems an inquiry among the tombs, or rather in the shades beyond them.

Ibant solâ sub nocte per umbram.

I am glad it is so—I am glad of this factitious dumbness; for if murmurs dared to become audible, my voice would be too feeble to drown them; but when all is hushed—when nature sleeps—

Cum quies mortalibus ægris.—

The weakest voice is heard—the shepherd's whistle shoots across the listening darkness of the interminable heath, and gives notice that the wolf is upon his walk; and the same gloom and stillness that tempt the monster to come abroad, facilitate the communication of the warning to beware. Yes, through that silence the voice shall be heard; yes, through that silence the shepherd shall be put upon his guard; yes, through that silence shall the felon savage be chased into the toil. Yes, my lords, I feel myself cheered and impressed by the composed and dignified attention with which I see you are disposed to hear me on the most important question that has ever been subjected to your consideration; the most important to the dearest rights of the human being; the most deeply interesting and animating that can beat in his heart, or burn upon his tongue—Oh! how recreating is it to feel that occasions may arise in which the soul of man may reassume her pretensions; in which she hears the voice of nature whisper to her, *os homini sublime dedi cœlumque tueri;* in which even I can look *up* with calm security to the court, and down with the most profound contempt upon the reptile I mean to tread upon! I say reptile; because, when the proudest man in society becomes so the dupe of his childish malice, as to wish to inflict on the object of his vengeance the poison of his sting, to do a reptile's work he must shrink into a reptile's dimension; and so shrunk, the only way to assail him is to tread upon him. But to the subject:—this writ of Habeas Corpus has had a return. That return states, that Lord Ellenborough, chief justice of England, issued a warrant reciting the foundation of this dismal transaction: that *one* of the clerks of the crown-office had certified to him, that an indictment had been found at Westminster, charging the Hon. Robert Johnson, late of Westminster, one of the justices of his majesty's court of common pleas in Ireland, with the publication of certain slanderous libels against the government of that country; against the person of his excellency Lord Hardwicke, lord lieutenant of that country; against the person of Lord Redesdale, the chancellor of Ireland; and against the person of Mr. Justice Osborne, one of the justices of the court of king's-bench in Ireland. One of the clerks of the crown-office, it seems, certified all this to his lordship. How many of those there are, or who they are, or which of them so certified, we cannot presume to guess, because the learned and noble lord is silent as to those circumstances. We are only informed that one of them made that important communication to his lordship. It puts me in mind of the information given to one of Fielding's justices: 'did not,' says his worship's wife, 'the man with the wallet make his *fidavy* that you was a *vagram?*' I suppose it was some such petty bag officer who gave Lord Ellenborough to understand that Mr. Justice Johnson was indicted. And being thus given to understand and be informed, he issued his warrant to a gentleman, no doubt of great respectability, a Mr. Williams, his tipstaff, to take the body of Mr. Justice Johnson and bring him before a magistrate, for the purpose of giving bail to appear within the first eight days of this term, so that there might be a trial within the sittings after; and if, by the blessing of God, he should be convicted, then to appear on the return of the *postea*, to be dealt with according to law.

"Perhaps it may be a question for you to decide, whether that warrant, such as it may be, is not now absolutely spent: and, if not, how a man can contrive to be hereafter in England on a day that is past? And high as the opinion may be in England of Irish understanding, it will be something beyond even Irish exactness to bind him to appear in England not a fortnight hence, but a fortnight ago. I wish, my lords, we had the art of giving time this retrograde motion. If possessed of the secret, we might possibly be disposed to improve it from fortnights into years.

"There is something not incurious in the juxta-position of signatures. The warrant is signed by the chief justice of all England. In music, the ear is reconciled to strong transitions of key by a preparatory resolution of the intervening discords; but here, alas! there is nothing to break the fall: the august title of Ellenborough is followed by the unadorned name of brother Bell, the sponsor of his lordship's warrant. Let me not, however, be suffered to deem lightly of the compeer of the noble and learned lord. Mr. Justice Bell ought to be a lawyer; I remember him myself long a crier *, and I know his credit with the state; he has had a

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* This gentleman was formerly crier to the late Baron Hamilton, when the baron went circuit as a judge.

noli prosequi. I see not, therefore, why it may not fairly be said "*fortunati ambo!*" It appears by this return, that Mr. Justice Bell indorses this bill of lading to another consignee, Mr. Medlicot, a most respectable gentleman; he describes himself upon the warrant, and he gives a delightful specimen of the administration of justice, and the calendar of saints in office; he describes himself a justice and a peace officer—that is, a magistrate and a catchpole:—So that he may receive informations as a justice; if he can write, he may draw them as a clerk; if not, he can execute the warrant as bailiff; and, if it be a capital offence, you may see the culprit, the justice, the clerk, the bailiff, and the hangman together in the same cart; and, though he may not write, he may "ride and tie!" What a pity that their journey should not be further continued together! That, as they had been "lovely in their lives, so in their deaths they might not be divided!" I find, my lords, I have undesignedly raised a laugh; never did I less feel merriment.—Let not me be condemned—let not the laugh be mistaken. Never was Mr. Hume more just than when he says, that "in many things the extremes are nearer to one another than the means." Few are those events that are produced by vice and folly, that fire the heart with indignation, that do not also shake the sides with laughter. So when the two famous moralists of old beheld the sad spectacle of life, the one burst into laughter, the other melted into tears: they were each of them right, and equally right.

Si credas utrique
Res sunt humanæ flebile ludibrium.

But these laughs are the bitter ireful laughs of honest indignation,—or they are the laughs of hectic melancholy and despair.

"It is stated to you, my lords, that these two justices, if justices they are to be called, went to the house of the defendant. I am speaking to judges, but I disdain the paltry insult it would be to them, were I to appeal to any wretched sympathy of situation. I feel I am above it. I know the bench is above it. But I know, too, that there are ranks, and degrees, and decorums to be observed; and, if I had a harsh communication to make to a venerable judge, and a similar one to his crier, I should certainly address them in a very different language indeed. A judge of the land, a man not young, of infirm health, has the sanctuary of his habitation broken open by these two persons, who set out with him for the coast, to drag him from his country, to hurry him to a strange land by the 'most direct way!' till the king's writ stopt the malefactors, and left the subject of the king a waif dropt in the pursuit.

"Is it for nothing, my lords, I say this? Is it without intention I state the facts in this way? It is with every intention. It is the duty of the public advocate not so to put forward the object of public attention, as that the skeleton only shall appear, without flesh, or feature, or complexion. I mean every thing that ought to be meant in a court of justice. I mean not only that this execrable attempt shall be intelligible to the court as a matter of *law*, but shall be understood by the world as an act of *state*. If advocates had always the honesty and the courage, upon occasions like this, to despise all personal considerations, and to think of no consequence but what may result to the public from the faithful discharge of their sacred trust, these phrenetic projects of power, these atrocious aggressions on the liberty and happiness of men, would not be so often attempted; for, though a certain class of delinquents may be screened from punishment, they cannot be protected from hatred and derision.

The great tribunal of reputation will pass its inexorable sentence upon their crimes, their follies, or their incompetency; they will sink themselves under the consciousness of their situation; they will feel the operation of an acid so neutralizing the malignity of their natures, as to make them at least harmless, if it cannot make them honest. Nor is there any thing of risk in the conduct I recommend. If the fire be hot, or the window cold, turn not your back to either; turn your face. So, if you are obliged to arraign the acts of those in high station, approach them not with malice, nor favour, nor fear. Remember that it is the condition of guilt to tremble, and of honesty to be bold; remember that your false fear can only give them false courage:—that while you nobly avow the cause of truth, you will find her shield an impenetrable protection; and that no attack can be either hazardous or inefficient, if it be just and resolute. If Nathan had not fortified himself in the boldness and directness of his charge, he might have been hanged for the malice of his parable.

"It is, my lords, in this temper of mind, befitting every advocate who is worthy of the name, deeply and modestly sensible of his duty, and proud of his privilege, equally exalted above the meanness of temporizing or of offending, most averse from the unnecessary infliction of pain upon any man or men whatsoever, that I now address you on a question the most vitally connected with the liberty and well-being of every man within the limits of the British empire; which, if decided one way, he may be a freeman; which, if decided the other, he must be a slave. It is not the Irish nation only that is involved in this question. Every member of the three realms is equally embarked; and would to God all England could listen to what passes here this day! they would regard us with more sympathy and respect, when the proudest Briton saw that his liberty was defended in what he would call a provincial court, and by a provincial advocate.

"Such, my lords, are the strange and unnatural monsters that may be produced by the union of malignity and folly. I cannot but own that I feel an indignant, and, perhaps, ill-natured satisfaction, in reflecting that my own country cannot monopolize the derision and detestation that such a production must attract. It was originally conceived by the wisdom of the east; it has made its escape, and come into Ireland under the sanction of the first criminal judge of the empire: where, I trust in God, we shall have only to feel shame or anger at the insolence of the visit; without the melancholy aggravation of such an execrable guest continuing *to reside* or *to be* among us. On the contrary, I will not dismiss the cheering expectation from my heart, that your decision, my lords, will shew the British nation, that a country having as just and as proud an idea of liberty as herself, is not an unworthy ally in the great contest for the rights of humanity; is no unworthy associate in resisting the progress of barbarity and military despotism; and in defending against its enemies that great system of British freedom, in which we have now a common interest, and under the ruins of which, if it should be overthrown, we must be buried in a common destruction.

"I am not ignorant, my lords, that this extraordinary construction has received the sanction of another court, nor of the surprise and dismay with which it smote upon the general heart of the bar. I am aware that I may have the mortification of being told in another country of that unhappy decision, and I foresee in what confusion I shall hang down my head when I am told of it. But I cherish too the consolatory hope, that I shall be able to tell them that I had an old and learned friend, whom I would put above all the sweepings of their hall *, who was of a different opinion; who had derived his ideas of civil liberty from the purest fountains of Athens and of Rome; who had fed the youthful vigour of his studious mind with the theoretic knowledge of their wisest philosophers and statesmen; and who had refined that theory into the quick and exquisite sensibility of moral instinct, by contemplating the practice of their most illustrious examples; by dwelling on the sweet soul'd piety of Cimon; on the anticipated christianity of Socrates; on the gallant and pathetic patriotism of Epaminondas; on that pure austerity of Fabricius, whom to move from his integrity would have been more difficult than to have pushed the sun from his course. I would add, that if he had seemed to hesitate, it was but for a moment; that his hesitation was like the passing cloud that floats across the morning sun, and hides it from the view, and does so for a moment hide it by involving the spectator without even approaching the face of the luminary. And this soothing hope I draw from the dearest and tenderest recollections of my life, from the remembrance of those attic nights and those refections of the gods which we have spent with those admired and respected and beloved companions who have gone before us;—over whose ashes the most precious tears of Ireland have been shed; yes, my good lord, I see you do not forget them; I see their sacred forms passing in sad review before your memory; I see your pained and softened fancy recalling those happy meetings, when the innocent enjoyment of social mirth expanded into the nobler warmth of social virtue, and the horizon of the board became enlarged into the horizon of man;—when the swelling heart conceived and communicated

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* Lord Avonmore, he has certainly a strong likeness to the picture. Those who know him perceive and acknowledge it.

the pure and generous purpose,—when my slenderer and younger taper imbibed its borrowed light from the more matured and redundant fountain of yours. Yes, my lord, we can remember those nights without any other regret than that they can never more return, for

"We spent them not in toys, or lust, or wine:
But search of deep philosophy,
Wit, eloquence, and poesy;
Arts which I lov'd, for they, my friend, were thine."

It has been remarked by Locke, in a short metaphysical work on the "*Conduct* of the Human Understanding," that let a man be much engaged in the contemplation of one sort of knowledge, *that* becomes every thing to him. The mind will take such a tincture from a familiarity with that object, that every thing else, how remote soever, will be brought under the same view: a metaphysician will bring ploughing and gardening immediately to abstract notions; an alchymist, on the contrary, shall reduce divinity to the maxims of his laboratory, explain morality by *sal*, sulphur, and mercury, and allegorize the Scripture itself, and the sacred mysteries thereof, into the philosopher's stone; and I heard once a man who had a more than ordinary excellency in music, seriously accommodate Moses' seven days of the first week, to the notes of music, as if from thence had been taken the measure and method of creation.

Such was the transcendency of Mr. Curran's imagination over the other powers of his mind, that law, politics, literature, and all other subjects noticed by him, were tinctured with it. On these, as on a mighty river flowing through rich meadows enamelled with flowers, you saw on its bosom the reflected image of the hyacinth and the asphodel, whilst the beholder gazed enraptured, inhaling the fragrance of the flowers and the freshness of the waters.

Amidst the contentions with Lord Clare, many incidents must have arisen; this, however, is well known: Lord Clare was frequently accompanied by a large dog; he came on the bench to him one day when Mr. Curran was engaged in an argument, and the judge's attention was diverted from the advocate to the dog, which he began to fondle and pat; Mr. Curran perceiving this, suddenly stopped, and when the judge awoke to a fresh hearing by the cessation of sound, and looked to Mr. Curran to resume, he apologized for his unwillingness to disturb his lordship, as he conceived he might have been engaged in a consultation.

Going to dine in the country with the now Judge Fletcher, he had arrived early enough to take a walk in the garden; Mr. Fletcher's country seat is separated from a public road by a stone wall, which having fallen in during a severe winter, the gardens were thereby left open to the dust of the road: it was now the month of April, and Mr. Fletcher was observing on the rows of broccoli, which he said were very backward, and scarcely to be seen, though they had been carefully *drilled*. On which Mr. Curran observed, "It is very true, but consider, they have been much exposed to the dust, and look as if they had been after a *long march*." This sally is said to have cost the judge more than he calculated upon, as he immediately raised the wall six feet higher.

Lord Avonmore supported the measure of the Union, it is probable, as the result of his judgement; Mr. Curran opposed it. It was said, in gratitude for this the lord obtained from the crown an office of considerable emolument. When the draught of the patent was sent to him for his approbation, he called into his study a few of his friends, among the rest, Mr. Curran, to see if all was right. The wording ran in the usual form; "To all to whom these letters patent shall come, greeting, &c. &c. we of the *united* kingdom of Great Britain and *Ireland*, king, &c. &c.;" Mr. Curran, when the reader came to this part, exclaimed, "Stop, stop!" "My God!" said Lord Avonmore impatiently, "why stop?" "Why? because," said Mr. Curran, "it sets out the *consideration* too early in the deed."

Mr. Hudson, the dentist, lived very near the Priory, and had built there at considerable expense, among other things, a pair of piers, so massive and heavy, and so fantastical in their structure, that they drew the attention of some person on a visit with Mr. Curran, who asked him of what order of architecture they were. "Of the Tuscan," replied Mr. Curran. Many changes were rang upon this piece of wit; one said the mansion was fit for the Grand Duke of Tuscany.

One of the relations of the same Mr. Hudson, who having served his time to the profession of dentist, but who afterwards changed it for the more honourable one of war, had returned from the Continent, after a memorable battle fought there, covered with glory, and "bearded like a pard," he attracted so much notice, that some one asked about him, and from whence he came. "Late from *Pultusk*," said Mr. Curran.

Mr. Lysaght, the barrister and bard, once returning from circuit, brought with him some young woman about forty miles on the way to Dublin, and meeting a chaise going back, he sent the lady home. On relating this to Mr. Curran, he said, "How sweet's the love that meets return!"

Stopping at an inn one morning to breakfast, and perceiving every thing unpromising, he said to the waiter, "My good sir, I regret to learn that this house has fallen back very much indeed, indeed it has; yet I remember myself cheered and refreshed by the comforts of its hospitality; it was a neat and a clean retreat, but report deals unkindly with it, and it is so malicious as to say that your hens do not *lay fresh eggs.*" This alarmed the pride of the waiter, and he was determined to keep up the honour of the house, and as Mr. Curran observed of his story, that it was not without its good effect, it was not *ab ovo ad mala!*

On consulting a friend on the propriety of dining at the house of another, on an invitation written under peculiar circumstances, the friend modestly excused himself from giving any opinion on a subject embarrassed by delicacies, and said, "Your own understanding could better decide upon a subject of this or of any other nature; it is to it I would resort were I placed as you are, and not to a mind so much inferior as I feel mine to be." "God help you, my friend, do not be deceived, take my word for it, the fellow who writes the notes to Virgil is often much more wise than the epic poet; I do assure you he often is."

Few men have filled a greater space than Mr. Curran; after many of his speeches he has been frequently chaired through the streets of Dublin, amidst the plaudits and acclamations of its citizens; paintings and engravings extended the celebrity of his name, and the wax works of him, of Voltaire, Mr. Fox, and Mr. Grattan, were exhibited throughout the principal cities of Europe, whilst his speeches and such other productions as could be obtained, were spread over the vast continent of the New World, from Ontario to the Alleganies, and westward from the Ohio to Lexington, *A Gadibus usque Auroram.* Their circulation was nearly co-extensive with the English language. So much was he the object of imitation, that the young orators copied even his defects; like Hotspur,

> ———— "He was indeed the glass
> Wherein the noble youth did dress themselves."

A lawyer, a friend of Mr. Curran, who had devoted much more of his time to the study of Hoyle than of Hale, a notable gambler, but a person of eccentric and lively turn of mind, got entangled with Mr. Curran one day after dinner, and losing a little ground on the score of temper, sharply observed, that he had too much spirit to allow any person to go too far with him, and passionately added, "No man shall trifle with me with impunity;" to which Mr. Curran replied, "*Play* with you, Roderick, you mean."

Mr. Curran one day riding by the country seat of one of the judges, was struck by a group of lovely children whom he perceived playing in the avenue; he stopped to inquire to whom all these fine children belonged; he was answered by the nurse, who had a beautiful infant in her arms, that they were the children of Judge ——. "Pray, my good woman, how many of them has he?" "There are twelve playing about inside, and this in my arms is the thirteenth." "Then," said Mr. Curran, "the judge has a full jury, and may proceed to trial whenever he chooses, and the young one will make an excellent *crier*."

Mr. Egan, the lawyer, was a person of very large stature and of great thews and sinews: on going into the bath, he exultingly struck his breast, all over matted with hair, and exclaimed, "Curran, did you ever see so fine a *chest?*" "*Trunk*, you mean," said Mr. Curran.

Mr. Curran happening to cross-examine one of those persons known in Ireland by the significant description of half-gentlemen, found it necessary to ask a question as to his knowledge of the Irish tongue, which, though perfectly familiar to him, the witness affected not to understand, whilst he, at the same time, spoke extremely bad English: "I see, sir, how it is, you are more ashamed of knowing your own language, than of not knowing any other."

Of the same family with that last related, an anecdote is told with great humour by Mr. K—. A person of kindred genius with the above-mentioned Irish gentleman, whose portion of English was rather scant, proceeding for the first time from the interior of the country to town, in a public carriage, accompanied by a native, half servant and half companion, dealt out his conversation in that language, with what his friend, who knew the extent of his stock, very rightly considered an indiscreet profusion, who whispering this gentleman, said, "Keep a pull in your hand, or by J—s you will not *hould* out, till we get to Dublin."

A gentleman who was too desirous of attracting the attention of those about him to the style and fashion of his dress, and one time, to the shape of a pair of half boots, which he had that day drawn on, appealed to Mr. Curran, among others, for his opinion, who said, "He observed but one fault,—they shewed too much of the *calf*."

A barrister entered the hall with his wig very much awry, and of which, not at all apprized, he was obliged to endure from almost every observer some remark on its appearance, till at last, addressing himself to Mr. Curran, he asked him, " Do you see any thing ridiculous in this wig?" The answer instantly was, " Nothing but the head."

A gentleman, whose father had been a wealthy and respectable shoemaker of the city of Dublin, and who had indulged many persons with credit, had lately died, and left, with other property, his account books to his son, who was a person of great vivacity and good humour; an old debtor of the father, in bandying wit with the son, annoyed him with the piquancy of his raillery, the son observed, that he was paying off in an odd coin, demanded payment of the debt, and said, if it was further delayed, he would *sue* him: the other asked in what capacity would he *sue?* " As *sole executor*," said Mr. Curran.

Mr. Curran made frequent excursions to England, "*to distract*," as he said, and there he enjoyed the society of many friends, Lords Moira, Carleton, and a long catalogue of persons eminent for rank and talents. Burke and Sheridan, though known to him, he appears never to have set so high a value upon as other men did. Of Burke he used to say, that " his mind was like an over decorated chapel, filled with gauds and shews, and badly assorted ornaments." Of Dr. Johnson, that "He was a superstitious and brutish bigot, and that, with the exception of his Dictionary, he had done more injury to the English language than even Gibbon himself." These paradoxes examined may be found to contain much truth in them; *they are not my words, but those which Ofellus taught me.*

Of John Horne Tooke he thought, in the words of Mr. Grattan, that no man was to be found of more acuteness, or of more undaunted resolution. "Methinks," said Mr. Grattan, "if Mr. John Horne Tooke purposed to drink his glass of wine, and that the bolts of heaven had rent asunder the earth beneath his feet, Mr. J. H. Tooke would still drink his glass of wine." Mr. Tooke, in once asking a countryman of Mr. Curran's, what opinion the Irish entertained of his wit compared with that of Mr. Sheridan; on being answered, that his own countrymen conceived no other man living possessed it in equal brilliancy, richness, and variety, the philosopher of England observed, "I know both these gentlemen, and I know them well, both in public and private; Sheridan is laboured and polished, you always see the marks of the chisel and hatchet about him; Curran is a rich and glittering ore, which is raised from the mine without effort, and in the most exuberant profusion."

A gentleman, whose sincere admiration of the charms of Mr. Tooke's conversation led him one day into flattery of the philologist, observed, that in addition to Mr. Tooke's profound learning, he really believed him to be by far the best companion in Great Britain. "Yes," said Mr. Tooke, humouring his friend, "I rather think I am, with the exception of one other gentleman, namely, the Right Honourable John Philpot Curran."

At Wimbledon he frequently met Sir Francis Burdett, and formed with him a close intimacy. The Baronet in private life becomes a great contrast to the character he exhibits in public. He presents you with no other feature than that of an honest, direct, and amiable gentleman, unambitious of every thing but of acquiring knowledge, and without assumption of any kind.

One summer evening Mr. Curran determined to return from Wimbledon to London, took early leave of Mr. Tooke, and, while waiting for his carriage, he walked across the common, and passed away a most interesting hour at coffee with Lady B. her sister Lady Guildford, and some few other ladies who were on a visit there. Being asked the news from Ireland, he drew from his pocket a letter said to have been found in some street of Dublin, written and signed by a late lord chancellor of that country, and addressed to the provost of Trinity College, Dublin, and to the grave and learned board of senior fellows, announcing the birth of his new born female child, and consulting them what sort of wet nurse they in their wisdom would recommend for the nurture of a plant not quite indigenous. This simple fiction, ridiculous as it was, yet in his hands became one of the most entertaining pieces of comedy. It was given in the happiest vein of humour, and was dramatized with astonishing felicity and effect, to the surprise and delight of the ladies, who assured Mr. Curran on parting, that they had much profited by the very valuable knowledge imparted to them in so unusual and delightful a manner.

Shortly after this he was engaged to dine in that neighbourhood, where he suspected that the party were drawn together to meet and to be entertained by so extraordinary a personage: he conceived that some projected expectation of this sort was on foot; but that finely-toned instrument was not to be thus rudely played upon: his pride took the alarm and revolted; and he hid behind a cloud for that day. It was observed by his host that he dined very poorly, or not at all; to which he replied by relating, " that he once by chance travelled with Incledon, the celebrated ballad singer, and a musician who accompanied him, not only on his travels but on the piano forte, and that he had taken a lesson from that man. It is customary," he added, "with singers on the days of their *performances* to abstain from dinner, on the notion that empty vessels, by affording space, add considerably to the force of sound." By some wrong association of ideas, this simple cockney conceived he was so identified with his principal, that he had under this delusion imposed the same restraints on himself. Both were seated to dinner, and both, like persons sworn on a jury, refused all manner of aliment; and the musician, though urgently and separately pressed to dine, still refused, and excused himself to the host, by assuring him and the company in these words, "No, we cannot.—On my honour, Sir, *we* gentlemen *performers never dines*." The point was felt, and the scheme abandoned.

Mr. Curran made occasional visits into France, where he met with many of those most celebrated for genius and letters; among others he became acquainted with the Abbé Sicard, and returned him thanks in the name of human nature for the good he had done to mankind. He was also well known to Madame De Stael, and his account of her accords with what has long before been known to the public. He conversed with her, and though her face was by no means prepossessing, he describes her as having the power of *talking herself into a beauty*. In this observation, it is probable, he may have had a personal interest.

It has been observed by some eminent writer, that when any person becomes most celebrated for wit, the fugitive pieces of the day are generally ascribed to him, and that he gets credit for what does not always belong to him, frequently for more than he is strictly entitled to. If this has taken place in any instance in this collection, the impossibility of separating those good things which have had currency under his name, may be fairly offered in excuse. To trace any such, if such have been introduced, to their genuine author, one should have been identified in time, and almost in existence with the person who uttered them. There is certainly one other person in this country who could dispute the empire with Mr. Curran—*divisum imperium cum Jove Cæsar habet*—let both divide the crown. His pretensions are great, and would also that his productions were added to the national stock, to be imparted to posterity with equal delight as they have been to society, the esteem and admiration of which he has ever enjoyed. Of him, Mr. K——, Mr. Curran used pleasantly to remark, "Much as I regard him, I never hear his name mentioned without some hatred of him, when I consider the great number of good things he has uttered, all of which I myself might have said."

If, therefore, any thing of this nature has escaped the best enquiry, a further injustice is done to Mr. Curran by omissions, which no diligence could supply. Of him it might be said, as of Scaliger, that every thing he uttered was worthy to be recorded. Of him it might with equal truth have been observed, as of Edmund Burke, that if one were driven by a shower of rain under a shed, and for the first time met with him, the person so meeting and conversing with him would depart filled with impressions of surprise and admiration. To cross a street with Mr. Curran, to pass an hour with him in a ride or walk, no matter what the occasion was, he was perpetually pouring from those inexhaustible fountains of genius, those streams which it were as hopeless to collect as it would be impossible to dry up.

Such interest have the bar of Ireland, and in truth all classes of his countrymen, taken in preserving whatever could be gleaned of him, that the first avowal of this publication was hailed with expressions of universal gratification. If through the imperfection of its execution that sentiment shall be thrown back into disappointment, this consolation and this hope remain, that even from the failure may arise fresh activity to collect materials widely diffused, and to call out by association the generous contribution of Mr. Curran's memorables, which are floating and fading on the memories of his cotemporaries. Time is rapidly consuming them; were this opportunity and this occasion lost, when the men of this hour shall cease to be, no other trace is left behind.

Mr. Curran had been married very early to a Miss Creagh, of the county of Cork, with whom for many years he lived very happily. She was of an ancient and highly esteemed family, in the neighbourhood of Newmarket. His union with this lady was founded on affection; her fortune, though small, yet enabled him to pursue his career of study and ambition, and took off many difficulties to which his youth might otherwise have been exposed. He built on a glen in his native country a tasty and rather an handsome cottage, which he called the *Priory*. This became the residence of his family, and the occasional resort of many of the first men of his time and of his country, while his yet limited fortune did not permit a suitable residence in the capital. From this connection, commenced under the happiest auspices of mutual affection, afterwards sprang the sorest tortures of his life: it was here began the tempest to his soul. He had many children by this marriage; and so unhappy became his mind by the dishonour which afterwards ensued, that it rent asunder the finest charities of the heart; and for ever afterwards were broken up those great ties and ligaments, by which nature binds the savage and the sage in delicious bondage to the sovereignty of this protecting contrivance. Yet, by permitting his mind to dwell too ardently on this domestic and deplorable calamity, he appears to have suffered under its influence, and to have permitted his own peace to be poisoned. These matters had a powerful re-action on his own happiness; and, thus swung from his moorings, he seemed never after to have had any safe anchorage to ride upon. It is true his vivacity, though impaired, was not extinguished; it burst forth like gleams of light, and vanished; its fiery track left a burning ember after it. The moral aliment by which he was accustomed to be nourished was gone, or, if it remained, it did so remain, but to sour upon his stomach; and to the morbid state of the affections of the heart, succeeded a distracting and a malady of soul, for which society gave but the peace of its presence. Such was the distress, so deep and so afflicting, that, with all the elasticity of his temperament, it took him years to consent to be concerned in actions of that nature which unbound his own wounds; and, in his own words, " let in the brine of the salt sea through the chinks of a vessel, not yet sufficiently staunched or seasoned to keep it out." At length, however, he conquered those sensations; and we find him the advocate in the famous case of the Rev. Charles Massy against the Marquis of Headfort, tried at Ennis, in the county of Clare, in July 1804, where damages were laid at £40,000, and £10,000 were recovered,—a tribute to eloquence; but how can money heal a wounded spirit? This he spoke of as a gigantic victory over his own feelings; and, in this trial, the philosopher might have traced the history of human suffering amidst the most glowing eloquence; he could have deduced what might have supplied the moral chair with maxims and illustrations, fresh from the mint of nature, by perceiving the agonies of two sufferers identified in the client and in the advocate. Here he had nothing to dramatize, nothing unreal. He had but to spread upon the canvas the picture of woe familiar to his own sufferings: he did so; and if the reporter (the editor of this collection,) were faithful, or fortunate to preserve the genuine features of the figure, such might have been placed among the works of the first masters: but to those who heard him, and felt the effect of his overwhelming eloquence, to such it was as electric, and as affecting a piece of pathos, as ever yet was addressed to human feelings: it bore down every thing before it; and he who wrote was often suspended in his labours; and those who heard it were entranced and amazed. Mr. Curran was much flattered on hearing that it drew tears from the eyes of our gracious Queen on the reading of it. But, had she heard it delivered, the native notes of Kotesbue would have been, in comparison, but mock heroic. Not quite apprised how queens feel upon these occasions, certain it is, that her humble subjects, the Ennis ladies, enjoyed it in transports, and his name resounded through the rocks and groves of Edenvale.

In the action for criminal conversation, brought by Mr. Curran against the Rev. Mr. Sandys, (not Sandes,) Lord Clare was supposed not to be an indifferent spectator. It was on this occasion Mr. Saurin's talents were first drawn forth in a statement for defendant, at once solid, luminous, and vehement. It was on this occasion he brought out to public view the eloquence of his judgement; and he exhibited proofs of those superior powers, which have ever since sustained the fame he here so justly merited. Hitherto he was considered as a lawyer learned and profound, matured by study, and little indulging in that grave humour, which he so eminently possesses, and so rarely indulges in. To this occasion may be referred the first foundation of his fame, and of his elevation; and I owe it to him and to truth to say, that when history comes to record his name, it (more just than passion) may thus describe him: He was a profound lawyer, one who of his times made the nearest approaches to the character of a wise man; of pure morals, and of gentle and unassuming manners; as in architecture the grandeur of the building is found in the simplicity of the design, so in him you saw the best moral order, and you saw it without effort; his repose resembled those deep and silent waters of the lake, which sleep till chafed by the tempest, or becoming swoln by the mountain torrent, they rise and rush over the opposing rocks with an overwhelming and tremendous roar, with sounds at once solemn and sublime. Lord Avonmore, the early patron and friend of Mr. Curran, tried the case; and, in its progress, many interesting and affecting scenes took place; the private feelings of the man, his known partiality for the plaintiff, though occasionally interrupted by some small jealousies, the pity for his sufferings, frequently burst forth in some of the finest touches ever witnessed; but the sense of justice, the pride and purity of his mighty mind, quickly deposed the brief authority of the most generous feelings; and the judge, resuming his great functions, shook off the dewdrops from the lion's mane. By the sovereignty of that character it was, that the judge alone presided. On this trial, as well of men as of the case, Mr. Plunket, (to whom Lord Avonmore had been a friend, and whose infancy had been protected since the loss of his father by that excellent nobleman,) was employed on the part of Mr. Sandys. Amidst the clashing of opposite arguments, and many animated contentions with Lord

Avonmore sustained for a long time in undecided conflicts, Mr. Plunket rallied with fresh forces, and drew upon those great stores, with which nature has so abundantly supplied him: sometimes playing off the light artillery of that wit, which his pride so chastens, that it lies back like that recondite matter in animal nature which is produced for sustenance, but upon great and important occasions; sometimes riding on the wiry edge of irony, his own appropriate figure; and which nor Swift nor Lucian ever possessed in a richer vein. In the indulgence of some of those sallies thrown off in the impetuosity of feeling, the ardent sensibility of the patron, the friend, and the judge, kindled, and rapidly rising into one of those impassioned blazes, to which his great nature was subject, he burst forth into this short exclamation, *et tu fili—and thou also, my son*. The effect was overpowering on Mr. Plunket; the sense of gratitude; the reverence for the venerable judge; the obligations imposed on him by the duty he owed his client, and other emotions of a nobler kind, became, by their varied combinations, irresistible; while he, overwhelmed by the impetuosity of mingled, yet contradictory forces, muffling his face in his mantle, sunk down, and was dissolved in tears—tears more creditable to him, than all that eloquence, less popular than argumentative, of which he of most men, may be truly said to be one of the greatest masters.

Mr. Curran obtained a verdict, and damages, which the defendant was never afterwards called upon to pay; he was scarcely ever heard of after; whilst the unhappy woman, sustained by the bounty of the afflicted husband, made the best atonement by a conduct ever after without reproach or censure. This event discoloured the stream of his future life; and, from the change in his domestic habits, furnished many topics for unkind observation. It is certain he did not refuse to her the consolation of a requested interview, when she lay on the bed of sickness, and, as she thought, of death. If he did not totally forget the injuries he had suffered, he generously consented to see her, which she sought as a consolation, and which to him was the severest trial. This occurred in London some years after the action: but a message, announcing the certainty of her recovery, made this melancholy visit unnecessary. The following extract will best express the agonies of his mind:

Extracts from the Speech of Mr. Curran, in behalf of the Rev. Charles Massy, against the Marquis of Headfort, for Criminal Conversation with Plaintiff's Wife, at Ennis Assizes, Co. Clare, on the 27th of July, 1804. Damages laid at 40,000*l.*—Verdict, 10,000*l.*

"Never so clearly as in the present instance, have I observed that safeguard of justice, which Providence hath placed in the nature of man. Such is the imperious dominion with which truth and reason wave their sceptre over the human intellect, that no solicitation, however artful, no talent, however commanding, can reduce it from its allegiance. In proportion to the humility of our submission to its rule, we do rise into some faint emulation of that ineffable and presiding Divinity, whose characteristic attribute it is—to be coerced and bound by the inexorable laws of its own nature, so as to be *all wise* and *all just* from necessity, rather than election. You have seen it in the learned advocate* who has preceded me, most peculiarly and strikingly illustrated—you have seen *even* his great talents, perhaps the first in any country, languishing under a cause too weak to *carry* him, and too heavy to be *carried* by him. He was forced to dismiss his natural candour and sincerity, and, having no merits in his case, to substitute the dignity of his own manner, the resources of his own ingenuity, over the overwhelming difficulties with which he was surrounded. Wretched client! unhappy advocate! What a combination do you form! But such is the condition of guilt—its commission mean and tremulous—its defence artificial and insincere—its prosecution candid and simple—its condemnation dignified and austere. Such has been the defendant's guilt—such his defence—such shall be my address, and such, I trust, your verdict. The learned counsel has told you, that this unfortunate woman is not to be estimated at forty thousand pounds—fatal and unquestionable is the truth of this assertion. Alas! gentlemen, she is no longer worth any thing—faded, fallen, degraded, and disgraced, she is worth less than nothing! But it is for the honour, the hope, the expectation, the tenderness, and the comforts that have been blasted by the defendant, and have fled for ever, that you are to remunerate the plaintiff, by the punishment of the defendant. It is not her present value which you are to weigh, but it is her value at that time, when she sat basking in a husband's love, with the blessing of heaven on her head, and its purity in her heart;—when she sat amongst her family, and administered the morality of the parental board. Estimate that past value, compare it with its present deplorable diminution; and it may lead you to form some judgement of the severity of the injury, and the extent of the compensation.

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* The late Mr. Geo. Ponsonby, who went specially for the Marquis.

" His late counsel contend, that the plaintiff has been the author of his own suffering, and ought to receive no compensation for the ill-consequences of his own conduct. In what part of the evidence do you find any foundation for that assertion? He indulged her, it seems, in dress! Generous and attached, he probably indulged her in that point beyond his means; and the defendant now impudently calls on you, to find an excuse for the adulterer, in the fondness and liberality of the husband. But you have been told, that the husband connived. Odious and impudent aggravation of injury!—to add calumny to insult, and outrage to dishonour! From whom, but a man hackneyed in the paths of shame and vice—from whom, but from a man having no compunctions in his own breast to restrain him, could you expect such brutal disregard for the feelings of others? From whom, but the cold-blooded veteran seducer—from what, but from the exhausted mind, the habitual community with shame—from what, but the habitual contempt of virtue and of man, could you have expected the arrogance, the barbarity, and folly of so foul, because so false an imputation? He should have reflected, and have blushed, before he suffered so vile a topic of defence to have passed his lips. But, ere you condemn, let him have the benefit of the excuse, if the excuse be true. You must have observed how his counsel fluttered and vibrated, between what they call connivance and injudicious confidence; and how, in affecting to distinguish, they have confounded them both together. If the plaintiff has connived, I freely say to you, do not reward the wretch who has prostituted his wife, and surrendered his own honour; do not compensate the pandar of his own shame, and the willing instrument of his own infamy. But as there is no sum so low, to which such a defence, if true, ought not to reduce your verdict; so, neither is any so high to which such a charge ought not to inflame it, if such a charge be false. Where is the single fact in this case on which the remotest suspicion of connivance can be hung? Odiously has the defendant endeavoured to make the softest and most amiable feelings of the heart, the pretext of his slanderous imputations. An ancient and respectable prelate*, the husband of his wife's sister, chained down to the bed of sickness, perhaps to the bed of death. In that distressing situation, my client suffered that wife to be the bearer of consolation to the bosom of her sister; he had not the heart to refuse her, and the softness of his nature is now charged on him as a crime. He is now insolently told, that he connived at his dishonour, and that he ought to have foreseen, that the mansion of sickness and of sorrow would have been made the scene of assignation and of guilt. On this charge of connivance I will not farther weary you, or exhaust myself; I will add nothing more, than that it is as false as it is impudent: that in the evidence it has not a colour of support; and that by your verdict you should mark it with reprobation. The other subject, namely, that he was indiscreet in his confidence, does, I think, call for some discussion —for, I trust you see, that I affect not any address to your passions, by which you may be led away from the subject; I presume merely to separate the parts of this affecting case, and to lay them item by item before you with the coldness of detail, and not with any colouring or display of fiction or of fancy. Honourable to himself was his unsuspecting confidence, but fatal must we admit it to have been, when we look to the abuse committed upon it. But where was the guilt of this indiscretion? He did admit this noble lord to pass his threshold as his guest. Now the charge which this noble lord builds on this indiscretion is,—' Thou fool, thou hast confidence in my honour, and that was a guilty indiscretion; thou simpleton, thou thoughtest that an admitted and a cherished guest, would have respected the laws of honour and hospitality, and thy indiscretion was guilt. Thou thoughtest that he would have shrunk from the meanness and barbarity of requiting kindness with treachery, and thy indiscretion was guilt.'

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* Dr. Barnard, Bishop of Limerick, better known by the name of the Elegant Dean of Derry, the early friend of the editor.

" Gentlemen, what horrid alternative in the treatment of wives would such reasoning recommend? Are they to be immured by worse than eastern barbarity? Are their principles to be depraved, their passions sublimated, every finer motive of action extinguished by the inevitable consequences of thus treating them like slaves? Or is a liberal and generous confidence in them to be the passport of the adulterer, and the justification of his crimes?

" Honourably, but fatally for his own repose, he was neither jealous, suspicious, nor cruel. He treated the defendant with the confidence of a friend, and his wife with the tenderness of a husband. He did leave to the noble marquis the physical possibility of committing against him the greatest crime, which can be perpetrated against a being of an amiable heart and refined education. In the middle of the day, at the moment of divine worship, when the miserable husband was on his knees, directing the prayers and thanksgiving of his congregation to their God; that moment did the remorseless adulterer choose to carry off the deluded victim from her husband, from her child, from her character, from her happiness; as if, not content to leave his crime confined to its miserable aggravations, unless he gave it a cast and colour of factitious sacrilege and impiety. Oh! how happy had it been when he arrived at the bank of the river with the ill-fated fugitive, ere yet he had committed her to that boat, of which, like the fabled bark of Styx, the exile was eternal; how happy at that moment, so teeming with misery and with shame, if you, my lord*, had met him, and could have accosted him, in the character of that good genius which had abandoned him! How impressively might you have pleaded the cause of *the* father, of the child, of the mother, and even of the worthless defendant himself! You would have said, ‘ Is this the requital that you are about to make for respect and kindness, and confidence in your honour? Can you deliberately expose this young man, in the bloom of life, with all his hopes before him? Can you expose him, a wretched outcast from society, to the scorn of a merciless world? Can you set him adrift upon the tempestuous ocean of his own passions, at this early season, when they are most headstrong? and can you cut him out from the moorings of those domestic obligations by whose cable he might ride at safety from their turbulence? Think of, if you can conceive it, what a powerful influence arises from the sense of home, from the sacred religion of the *hearth* in quelling the passions, in reclaiming the wanderings, in correcting the disorders of the human heart! Do not cruelly take from him the protection of these attachments!

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* Baron Smith.

But if you have no pity for the father, have mercy at least upon his innocent and helpless child—do not condemn him to an education scandalous or neglected,—do not strike him into that most dreadful of all human conditions, the orphanage that springs not from the grave, that falls not from the hand of Providence, or the stroke of death; but comes before its time, anticipated and inflicted by the remorseless cruelty of parental guilt! For the poor victim herself—not yet immolated,—while yet balancing upon the pivot of her destiny, your heart could not be cold, nor your tongue be wordless. You would have said to him, Pause, my lord, while there is yet a moment for reflection! What are your motives, what your views, what your prospects from what you are about to do? You are a married man, the husband of the most amiable and respectable of women,—you cannot look to the chance of marrying this wretched fugitive! Between you and such an event there are two sepulchres to pass. What are your inducements? Is it love, think you? No,—do not give that name to any attraction you can find in the faded refuse of a violated bed. Love is a noble and generous passion; it can be founded only on a pure and ardent friendship, on an exalted respect, on an implicit confidence in its object. Search your heart; examine your judgement; do you find the semblance of any one of these sentiments to bind you to her? What could degrade a mind to which nature or education had given port, or stature, or character, into a friendship for her? Could you repose upon her faith? Look in her face, my lord—she is at this moment giving you the violation of the most sacred of human obligations as the pledge of her fidelity. She is giving you the most irrefragable proof that, as she is deserting her husband for you, so she would without a scruple abandon you for another. Do you anticipate any pleasure you might feel in the possible event of your becoming the parents of a common child? She is at this moment proving to you that she is as dead to the sense of parental as of conjugal obligation, and that she would abandon your offspring to-morrow, with the same facility with which she now deserts her own. Look then at her conduct,—as it is,—as the world must behold it,—blackened by every aggravation that can make it either odious or contemptible, and unrelieved by a single circumstance of mitigation that could palliate its guilt, or retrieve it from abhorrence!

"In this odious contempt of every personal feeling, of public opinion, of common humanity, did he parade this woman to the sea-port whence he transported his precious cargo to a country where her example may be less mischievous than in her own; where I agree with my learned colleague, in heartily wishing he may remain with her for ever. We are too poor, too simple, too unadvanced a country for the example of such achievements. When the relaxation of morals is the natural growth and consequence of the great progress of arts and wealth, it is accompanied by a refinement that makes it less gross and shocking: but for such palliations we are at least a century too young. I advise you, therefore, most earnestly to rebuke this budding mischief, by letting the wholesome vigour and chastisement of a liberal verdict speak what you think of its enormity. In every point of view in which I can look at the subject, I see you are called upon to give a verdict of bold, and just, and indignant, and exemplary compensation. The injury of the plaintiff demands it from your justice. The delinquency of the defendant provokes it by its enormity. The rank on which he has relied for impunity, calls upon you to tell him, that crime does not ascend to the rank of the perpetrator, but the perpetrator sinks from his rank, and descends to the level of his delinquency. The style and mode of his defence is a gross aggravation of his conduct, and a gross insult upon you. Look upon the different subjects of his defence, as you ought, and let him profit by them as he deserves. Vainly presumptuous upon his rank, he wishes to overawe you by the despicable consideration. He next resorts to a cruel aspersion upon the character of the unhappy plaintiff, whom he had already wounded beyond the possibility of reparation; he has ventured to charge him with connivance. As to that, I will only say, gentlemen of the jury, do not give this vain boaster a pretext for saying, that if the husband connived in the offence, the jury also connived in the reparation. But he has pressed another curious topic upon you: After the plaintiff had cause to suspect his designs, and the likelihood of their being fatally successful, he did not then act precisely as he ought. Gracious God, what an argument for him to dare to advance! It is saying this to him: "I abused your confidence, your hospitality; I laid a base plan for the seduction of the wife of your bosom; I succeeded at last, so as to throw in upon you that most dreadful of all suspicions to a man fondly attached, proud of his wife's honour, and tremblingly alive to his own; that you were possibly a dupe to the confidence in the wife, as much as in the guest: in this so pitiable distress, which I myself had studiously and deliberately contrived for you, between hope and fear, and doubt and love, and jealousy and shame: one moment shrinking from the cruelty of your suspicion; the next fired with indignation at the facility and credulity of your acquittal; in this labyrinth of doubt, in this phrensy of suffering, you were not collected and composed; you did not act as you might have done if I had not worked you to madness; and upon that very madness which I have inflicted upon you, upon the very completion of my guilt, and of your misery, I will build my defence. You will not act critically right, and therefore are unworthy of compensation." Gentlemen, can you be dead to the remorseless atrocity of such a defence! And shall not your honest verdict mark it as it deserves? But let me go a little further; let me ask you, for I confess I have no distinct idea, of what should be the conduct of an husband so placed, and who is to act critically right? Shall he lock her up, or turn her out? Or enlarge or abridge her liberty of acting as she pleases? Oh, dreadful Areopagus of the tea-table! How formidable thy inquests, how tremendous thy condemnations! In the first case, he is brutal and barbarous, an odious eastern despot. In the next; what! turn an innocent woman out of his house, without evidence or proof, but merely because he is vile and mean enough to suspect the wife of his bosom, and the mother of his child? Between these extremes, what intermediate degree is he to adopt? I put this question to you, do you at this moment, uninfluenced by any passion as you now are, but cool and collected, and uninterested as you must be, do you see clearly this proper and exact line, which the plaintiff should have pursued? I much question if you do. But if you did or could, must you not say, that he was the last man from whom you should expect the coolness to discover, or the steadiness to pursue it? And yet this is the outrageous and insolent defence that is put forward to you. My miserable client,—when his brain was on fire, and every fiend of hell was let loose upon his heart, he should then, it seems, have placed himself before his mirror; he should have taught the stream of agony to flow decorously down his forehead! He should have composed his features to harmony,—he should have writhed with grace and groaned in melody! But look farther to this noble defendant, and his honourable defence. The wretched woman is to be successively the victim of seduction and of slander. She, it seems, received marked attentions—here, I confess, I felt myself not a little at a loss. The witnesses could not describe what these marked attentions were or are. They consisted not, if you believe the witness that swore to them, in any personal approach or contact whatsoever—nor in any unwarrantable topics of discourse. Of what materials then were they composed? Why, it seems, a gentleman had the insolence at table to propose to her a glass of wine, and she,—oh most abandoned lady! instead of flying like an angry parrot at his head, and besmirching and bescratching him for his insolence, tamely and basely replies, 'port, Sir, if you please.' But, gentlemen, why do I advert to this folly, this nonsense? Not surely to vindicate from censure the most innocent, and the most delightful intercourse of social kindness, of harmless and cheerful courtesy—'Where virtue is, these are most virtuous.' But I am soliciting your attention and your feeling to the mean and odious aggravation—to the unblushing and remorseless barbarity of falsely aspersing the wretched woman he had undone. One good he has done; he has disclosed to you the point in which he can feel; for, how imperious must that avarice be which could resort to so vile an expedient of frugality? Yes, I will say, that with the common feelings of a man, he would have rather suffered his thirty thousand a year to go as compensation to the plaintiff, than saved a shilling of it by so vile an expedient of economy. He would rather have starved with her in a gaol, he would rather have sunk with her into the ocean, than have so vilified her, than have so degraded himself. But it seems, gentlemen, and indeed you have been told, that long as the course of his gallantries has been, and he has grown grey in the service, it is the first time he has been called upon for damages;—to how many might it have been fortunate, if he had not that impunity to boast? Your verdict will, I trust, put an end to that encouragement to guilt, that is built upon impunity: the devil, it seems, has saved the noble marquis harmless in the past; but your verdict will tell him the term of that indemnity is expired, that his old friend and banker has no more effects in his hands, and that if he draws any more upon him, he must pay his own bills himself. You will do much good by doing so; you may not enlighten his conscience, nor touch his heart, but his frugality will understand the hint. It will adopt the prudence of age, and deter him from pursuits, in which, though he may be insensible of shame, he will not be regardless of expense. You will do more; you will not only punish him in his tender point, but you will weaken him in his strong one, his money. We have heard much of this noble lord's wealth, and much of his exploits, but not much of his accomplishments or his wit. I know not that his verses have soared even to the Poet's Corner. I have heard it said, that an ass laden with gold could find his way through the gate of the strongest city: but, gentlemen, lighten the load upon his back, and you will completely curtail the mischievous faculty of a grave animal, whose momentum lies not in his agility but his weight, not in the quantity of motion, but the quantity of his matter. There is another ground on which you are called upon to give most liberal damages, and that has been laid by the unfeeling vanity of the defendant. This business has been marked by the most elaborate publicity. It is very clear that he has been allured by the glory of the chase, and not the value of the game. The poor object of his pursuit could be of no value to him, or he could not have so wantonly, and cruelly, and unnecessarily abused her. He might easily have kept this unhappy intercourse an unsuspected secret. Even if he wished for her elopement, he might easily have so contrived it, that the place of her retreat would be profoundly undiscoverable; yet, though even the expense, a point so tender to his delicate sensibility, of concealing, could not be a one-fortieth of the cost of publishing her, his vanity decided him in favour of glory and publicity.

By that election, he has in fact, put forward the Irish nation and its character, so often and so variously calumniated, upon its trial before the tribunal of the empire; and your verdict will this day decide, whether an Irish jury can feel with justice and spirit, upon a subject that involves conjugal affection and comfort, domestic honour and repose, the certainty of issue, the weight of public opinion, the gilded and presumptuous criminality of overweening rank and station. I doubt not, but he is at this moment reclined on a silken sofa, anticipating that submissive and modest verdict by which you will lean gently on his errors, and expecting from your patriotism, no doubt, that you will think again and again, before you condemn any great portion of the immense revenue of a great absentee, to be detained in the nation that produced it, instead of being transmitted, as it ought, to be expended in the splendour of another country. He is now probably waiting for the arrival of the report of this day, which, I understand, a famous note-taker has been sent hither to collect. (Let not the gentleman be disturbed.)* Gentlemen, let me assure you, it is more, much more the trial of you, than of the noble marquis, of which this imported recorder is at this moment collecting the materials. His noble employer is now expecting a report to the following effect; ' Such a day, came on to be tried at Ennis, by a special jury, the cause of Charles Massy, against the most noble the Marquis of Headfort. It appeared that the plaintiff's wife was young, beautiful, and captivating; the plaintiff himself, a person fond of this beautiful creature to distraction, and both doating on their child; but the noble marquis approached her,—the plume of glory nodded on his head; not the goddess Minerva, but the goddess Venus, had lighted upon his casque ' the fire that never tires, such as many a lady gay had been dazzled with before.' At the first advance she trembled, at the second, she struck to the redoubted son of Mars and pupil of Venus. The jury saw it was not his fault,—(it was an Irish jury)—they felt compassion for the tenderness of the mother's heart, and for the warmth of the lover's passion. The jury saw on the one side, a young entertaining gallant; on the other, a beauteous creature, of charms irresistible; they recollected, that Jupiter had been always successful in his amours, although Vulcan had not always escaped some awkward accidents. The jury was composed of fathers, brothers, husbands—but they had not the vulgar jealousy that views little things of that sort with rigour, and wishing to assimilate their country in every respect to England, now that they are united to it, they, like English gentlemen, returned to their box, with a verdict of sixpence damages and sixpence costs.' Let this be sent to England, I promise you, your odious secret will not be kept better than that of the wretched Mrs. Massy; there is not a bawdy chronicle in London, in which the epitaph which you would have written on yourselves will not be published, and our enemies will delight in the spectacle of our precocious depravity, in seeing that we can be rotten before we are ripe. I do not suppose it; I do not, cannot, will not believe it; I will not harrow up myself with the anticipated apprehension.

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* This was imagined only—it was a piece of fancy which he turned to good account.

"There is another consideration, gentlemen, which I think most imperiously demands even a vindictive award of exemplary damages, and that is the breach of hospitality. To us peculiarly does it belong to avenge the violation of its altar. The hospitality of other countries is a matter of necessity or convention, in savage nations of the first, in polished of the latter; *but the hospitality of an Irishman* is not the running account of posted and ledgered courtesies, as in other countries; it springs, like all his qualities, his faults, his virtues, directly from his heart. The heart of an Irishman is by nature bold, and he confides; it is tender, and he loves; it is generous, and he gives; it is social, and he is hospitable. This sacrilegious intruder has profaned the religion of that sacred altar, so elevated in our worship, so precious to our devotion, and it is your privilege to avenge the crime. You must either pull down the altar and abolish the worship, or you must preserve its sanctity undebased. There is no alternative between the universal exclusion of all mankind from your threshold, and the most rigorous punishment of him who is admitted and betrays. This defendant has been so trusted, has so betrayed, and you ought to make him a most signal example.

"Gentlemen, I am the more disposed to feel the strongest indignation and abhorrence at this odious conduct of the defendant, when I consider the deplorable condition to which he has reduced the plaintiff, and perhaps the still more deplorable one that he has in prospect before him. What a progress has he to travel through before he can attain the peace and tranquillity which he has lost? How like the wounds of the body are those of the mind! How burning the fever, how painful the suppuration, how slow, how hesitating, how relapsing the process to convalescence? Through what a variety of suffering, what new scenes and changes, must my unhappy client pass, ere he can re-attain, should he ever re-attain, that health of soul of which he has been despoiled by the cold and deliberate machinations of this practised and gilded seducer? If, instead of drawing upon his incalculable wealth for a scanty retribution, you were to stop the progress of his despicable achievements by reducing him to actual poverty, you could not, even so, punish him beyond the scope of his offence, nor reprise the plaintiff beyond the measure of his suffering."

If it be true, that imagination is essential to the

orator, and also to the poet; and that in the enthusiasm of the latter, judgement becomes less exercised, yet no poet or orator ever attained the heights of excellence in those delightful arts, who were not under the guidance and direction of judgement. It has been said of Homer, that he more abounds in wisdom, than any other writer; even Pindar himself, in all the fiery flights of his excursive genius, was much regulated by that power. If judgement presides in eloquence, imagination does in poetry. To give pleasure is the province of the latter, to persuade and convince belong to the former. An union of excellence in both therefore becomes, though rare, indispensable to the perfection of both, however unfrequent may be the combination. They are often mixed in different degrees, but, unlike the twin brothers, they are sometimes found to appear together in ascendancy: though when Castor rises Pollux sinks, yet wit and judgement are sometimes in conjunction, and then they are doubly bright.

One power constantly exercised tends, however, to diminish the other; and this we see exemplified in the early poems of Demosthenes, and of Cicero. The latter was esteemed a poet of great merit, but when he became immersed in business, his poetry fell into obscurity, and his eloquence rose from its tomb. Juvenal has treated with ridicule the poems of Cicero.

Intent on the study and practice of the law, the logical and mathematical departments of Mr. Curran's mind became too generally exercised to make any great advances in the cultivation of poetry; and what he wrote was more for the amusement of a solitary hour, than with intent to establish a reputation upon these less studied effusions. But had he been solely confined to any one, perhaps to more than one department of composition, there is no reason to doubt that he would not have excelled, and particularly in the higher walks of writing. These remarks may in some degree account for the following poem, in which mythology and celestial gallantry are mingled and paraded, with no very religious veneration for the heathen. It is entitled,

THE PLATE WARMER.

In days of yore, when mighty Jove
With boundless sway rul'd all above,
He sometimes chanc'd abroad to roam
For comforts, often miss'd at home:
For Juno, though a loving wife,
Yet lov'd the din of household strife;
Like her own peacocks proud and shrill,
She forc'd him oft against his will,
Hen-peck'd and over-match'd, to fly,
Leaving her empress of the sky,
And hoping on our earth to find
Some fair, less vocal and more kind.

But soon the sire of men and gods
Grew weary of our low abodes;
Tir'd with his calendar of saints,
Their squalling loves, their dire complaints:
For queens themselves, when queens are frail,
And forc'd for justest cause to rail,
To find themselves at last betray'd,
Will scold just like a lady's maid;
And thus poor Jove again is driv'n,
Oh sad resource! to go to heav'n.
Downcast and surfeited with freaks,
The crop-sick thund'rer upward sneaks,
More like a loser than a winner,
And almost like an earthly sinner;
Half quench'd the lustre of his eyes,
And lank the curl that shakes the skies;
His doublet button'd to his chin,
Hides the torn tucker folded in.
Scarce well resolv'd to go or stay,
He onward takes his ling'ring way,
For well he knows the bed of roses
On which great Juno's mate reposes.
At length to heav'n's high portal come,
No smile, no squeeze, no welcome home.
With nose up-toss'd and bitter sneer
She scowls upon her patient dear;
From morn till noon, from noon to night,
'Twas still a lecture to the wight;
And yet the morning, sooth to say,
Was far the mildest of the day;
For in those regions of the sky
The goddesses are rather shy
To beard the nipping early airs,
And, therefore, come not soon down stairs;

But, snugly wrapp'd, sit up and read,
Or take their chocolate in bed.
So Jove his breakfast took in quiet,
Looks there might be, but yet no riot;
And had good store of list'ners come,
It might have been no silent room;
But she, like our theatric wenches,
Lov'd not to play to empty benches:
Her brows close met in hostile form,
She heaves the symptoms of the storm,
But yet the storm itself repress'd,
Labours prelusive in her breast,
Reserv'd as music for that hour,
When every male and female pow'r
Should crowd the festive board around,
With nectar and ambrosia crown'd,
In wreathed smiles and garlands dress'd,
With Jove to share the gen'rous feast.
'Twas then the snowy-elbow'd queen
Drew forth the stores of rage and spleen;
'Twas then the gather'd storm she sped
Full-levelled at the thund'rer's head:
In descant dire she chanted o'er
The tale so often told before;
His graceless gambols here on earth,
The secret meeting, secret birth;
His country freaks in dells and valleys,
In town, o'er Strands and Cranbourne-alleys.
Here lifts his burglar hand the latch,
There scrambles through the peasant's thatch;
When such a prowling fox gets loose,
What honest man can keep his goose?
Nor was the Theban feat untold,
Trinoctial feat so fam'd of old;

When night the pandar vigil kept,
And Phœbus snor'd as if he'd slept,
And then Europa, hateful name!
A God a bull! Oh fie for shame!
When vagrant love can cost so dear,
No wonder we've no nurs'ry here,
No wonder, when imperial Jove
Can meanly hunt each paltry love,
Sometimes on land, sometimes on water,
With this man's wife and that man's daughter,
If I must wear a matron willow,
And lonely press a barren pillow.
When Leda, too, thought fit to wander,
She found her paramour a gander;
And did his godship mount the nest?
And take his turn to hatch and rest?
And did he purvey for their food,
And mince it for the odious brood?—
—The eagle wink'd and droop'd his wing,
Scarce to the dusky bolt could cling,
And look'd as if he thought his lord
A captain with a wooden sword;
While Juno's bird display'd on high
The thousand eyes of jealousy.
Hermes look'd arch, and Venus leer'd,
Minerva bridl'd, Momus sneer'd;
Poor Hebe trembl'd, simple lass,
And spilt the wine, and broke the glass.
Jove felt the weather rather rough,
And thought long since 't had blown enough:
His knife and fork, unus'd, were cross'd,
His temper and his dinner lost;
For ere the vesper peal was done,
The viands were as cold as stone,

This Venus saw, and griev'd to see,
For though she thought Jove rather free,
Yet at his idle pranks she smil'd,
As wanderings of a heart beguil'd;
Nor wonder'd if astray he run,
For well she knew her 'scape-grace son;
And who can hope his way to find,
When blind, and guided by the blind?
Her finger to her brow she brought,
And gently touch'd the source of thought,
The unseen fountain of the brain,
Where fancy breeds her shadowy train:
The vows that ever were to last,
But wither ere the lip they've pass'd;
The secret hope, the secret fear,
That heaves the sigh, or prompts the tear;
The ready turn, the quick disguise,
That cheats the lover's watchful eyes;
So from the rock, the sorc'rer's wand
The gushing waters can command;
So quickly started from the mind
The lucky thought she wish'd to find.
Her mantle round her then she threw,
Of twilight made, of modest hue.
The warp by mother Night was spun,
And shot athwart with beams of sun,
But beams first dawn through murky air,
To spunge the gloss and dim the glare;
Thus gifted with a double charm,
Like love 'twas secret and 'twas warm,
It was the very same she wore
On Simoi's banks, when, long before,
The sage Anchises form'd the plan
Of that so brave and god-like man;

Whose fame o'ertop'd the topmost star,
For arts of peace and deeds of war;
So fam'd for fighting and for praying,
For courting warm and cool betraying;
Who show'd poor Dido all on fire,
That Cyprus was not far from Tyre;
The founder of Hesperian hopes,
Sire of her demi-gods and popes.
And now her car the Paphian queen
Ascends, her car of sea-bright green,
Her Graces *slim* with golden locks
Sat smiling on the dicky box,
While Cupid wantons with a sparrow
That perch'd upon the urchin's arrow.
She gives the word, and through the sky
Her doves th' according pinions ply,
As bounding thought, as glancing light,
So swift they wing their giddy flight;
They pass the wain, they pass the sun,
The comet's burning train they shun,
Lightly they skim the ocean vast,
And touch the Lemnian Isle at last.
Here Venus checks their winged speed,
And sets them free to rest or feed,
She bids her Graces sport the while,
Or pick sweet posies round the isle,
But cautions them against mishaps,
For Lemnos is the isle of traps;
'Beware the lure of vulgar toys,
And fly from bulls and shepherd's boys.'

A cloud of smoke that climbs the sky
Bespeaks the forge of Vulcan nigh;

Thither her way the goddess bends,
Her darkling son her steps attends,
Led by the sigh that Zephyr breathes,
When round her roseate neck he wreathes.
The plastic God of fire is found,
His various labours scatter'd round;
Unfinish'd bars, and bolts, and portals,
Cages for gods, and chains for mortals;
'Twas iron work upon commission,
For a romance's first edition.
Soon as the beauteous queen he spied,
A sting of love, a sting of pride,
A pang of shame, of faith betray'd,
By turns his labouring breast invade;
But Venus quelled them with a smile
That might a wiser god beguile;
'Twas mix'd with shame, 'twas mix'd with love,
To mix it with a blush she strove;
With hobbling step he comes to greet
The faithless guest with welcome meet:
Pyracmon saw the vanquish'd god,
And gives to Steropes the nod,
He winks to Brontes, as to say,
We may be just as well away,
They've got some iron in the fire,—
So all three modestly retire.

‘ And now, sweet Venus, tell,’ he cries,
‘ What cause has brought thee from the skies?
Why leave the seats of mighty Jove?
Alas! I fear it was not love.
What claim to love could Vulcan boast,
An outcast on an exile coast,

Condemn'd, in this sequester'd isle,
To sink beneath unseemly toil?
'Tis not for me to lead the war,
Or guide the day's refulgent car;
'Tis not for me the dance to twine;
'Tis not for me to court the Nine;
No vision whispers to my dream;
No Muse inspires my wakeful theme;
No string responsive to my art
Gives the sweet note that thrills the heart:
The present is with gloom o'ercast,
And sadness feeds upon the past.
Say then; for ah! it can't be love,
What cause has brought thee from above?'
So spoke the god in jealous mood;
The wily goddess thus pursu'd;
'And canst thou, Vulcan, thus decline
The meeds of praise so justly thine?
To whom, the fav'rite son of Heav'n,
The mystic powers of fire are giv'n;
That fire that feeds the star of night,
And fills the solar beam with light;
That bids the stream of life to glow
Through air, o'er earth, in depths below:
Thou deignest not to court the Nine,
Nor yet the mazy dance to twine;
But these light gifts of verse and song
To humbler natures must belong:
Behold yon oak that seems to reign
The monarch of the subject plain,
No flow'rs beneath his arms are found,
To bloom and fling their fragrance round;
Abash'd in his o'erwhelming shade,
Their scents must die, their leaves must fade.

Thou dost not love through wastes of war,
Headlong to drive th' ensanguin'd car,
And sweep whole millions to the grave;
Thine is the nobler art to save:
Form'd by thy hand, the temper'd shield
Safe brings the warrior from the field;
Ah! could'st thou then the mother see,
Her ev'ry thought attach'd to thee!
Not the light love that lives a day,
Which its own sighs can blow away,
But fix'd and fervent in her breast,
The wish to make the blesser bless'd.
Then give thy splendid lot its due,
And view thyself as others view.
Great sure thou art, when from above,
I come a supplicant for Jove:
For Jove himself laments like thee
To find no fate from suff'ring free:
Dire is the strife when Juno rails,
And fierce the din his ear assails:
In vain the festive board is crown'd,
No joys at that sad board are found;
And when the storm is spent at last,
The dinner's cold, and Jove must fast.
Could'st thou not then with skill divine,
For ev'ry cunning art is thine,
Contrive some spring, some potent chain,
That might an angry tongue restrain,
Or find, at least, some mystic charm,
To keep the suff'rer's viands warm?
Should great success thy toils befriend,
What glory must the deed attend,
What joy through all the realms above,
What high rewards from grateful Jove!

How bless'd! could I behold thee rise
To thy lost station in the skies;
How sweet! should vows thou may'st have thought,
Or lightly kept, or soon forgot,
Which wayward fates had seem'd to sever,
Their knots re-tie and bind for ever!'

She said, and sigh'd, or seem'd to sigh,
And downward cast her conscious eye,
To leave the god more free to gaze:—
Who can withstand the voice of praise?
By beauty charm'd, by flatt'ry won,
Each doubt, each jealous fear is gone;
No more was bow'd his anxious head,
His heart was cheer'd, he smil'd and said:
'And could'st thou vainly hope to find
A pow'r the female tongue to bind?
Sweet friend! 'twere easier far to drain
The waters from th' unruly main,
Or quench the stars, or bid the sun
No more his destin'd courses run.
By laws, as old as earth or ocean,
That tongue has a perpetual motion,
Which marks the longitude of speech,
To curb its force no pow'r can reach:
Its privilege is rais'd above
The sceptre of imperial Jove.
Thine other wish, some mystic charm
To keep the suff'rer's viands warm,
I know no interdict of fate,
Which says that art mayn't warm a plate.
The model, too, I've got for that,
I take it from thy gipsy hat;

I saw thee thinking o'er the past,
I saw thine eye-beam upward cast,
I saw the concave catch the ray,
And turn its course another way,
Reflected back upon thy cheek,
It glow'd upon the dimpl'd *sleek*.'

The willing task was soon begun,
And soon the grateful labour done,
The ore, obedient to his hand,
Assumes a shape at his command;
The tripod base stands firm below,
The burnish'd sides ascending grow;
Divisions apt th' interior bound,
With vaulted roof the top is crown'd.
The artist, amorous and vain,
Delights the structure to explain;
To show how rays converging meet,
And light is gather'd into heat.
Within its verge he flings a rose,
Behold how fresh and fair it glows;
O'erpower'd by heat now see it waste,
Like vanished love its fragrance past!
Pleas'd with the gift, the Paphian queen
Remounts her car of sea-bright green;
The gloomy god desponding sighs,
To see her car ascend the skies,
And strains its less'ning form to trace,
Till sight is lost in misty space,
Then sullen yields his clouded brain,
To converse with habitual pain.
The goddess, now arriv'd above,
Displays the shining gift of love,

And shows fair Hebe how to lay
The plates of gold in order gay.
The gods and goddesses admire
The labour of the God of Fire,
And give it a high-sounding name,
Such as might hand it down to fame:
If 'twere to us, weak mortals, giv'n
To know the names of things in heav'n;
But on our sublunary earth
We have no words of noble birth,
And even our bards, in loftiest lays,
Must use the populace of phrase.
However call'd it may have been,
For many a circling year 'twas seen,
To glitter at each rich repast,
As long as heav'n was doom'd to last.
But faithless lord—and angry wife—
Repeated faults—rekindl'd strife—
Abandon'd all domestic cares—
To ruin sunk their sound affairs—
The immortals quit the troubl'd sky
And down for rest and shelter fly
Some seek the plains, and some the woods,
And some the brink of foaming floods;
Venus, from grief religious grown,
Endows a meeting-house in town;
And Hermes fills the shop next door
With drugs far-brought, a healthful store!
What fate the Graces fair befel,
The Muse has learn'd, but will not tell.
To try and make afflictions sweeter
Momus descends and lives with Peter,
Though scarcely seen the external ray,
With Peter all within is day,

For there the lamp, by nature giv'n,
Was fed with sacred oil from Heav'n.
Condemn'd a learned rod to rule,
Minerva keeps a Sunday-school.
With happier lot the God of day
To Brighton wings his minstrel way;
There come, a master-touch he flings,
With flying hand, across the strings;
Sweet flow the accents soft and clear,
And strike upon a kindred ear;
Admitted soon a welcome guest,
The God partakes the royal feast,
Pleas'd to escape the vulgar throng,
And find a judge of sense and song.
Meantime from Jove's high tenement,
To auction every thing is sent;
Oh grief! to auction here below!—
The gazing crowd admire the show;
Celestial beds, imperial screens,
Busts, pictures, lustres, bright tureens,
With kindling zeal the bidders vie,
The dupe is spurr'd by puffers sly,
And many a splendid prize knock'd down,
Is sent to many a part of town;
But all that's most divinely great
Is borne to ———'s in ——— street;
Th' enraptur'd owner loves to trace
Each prototype of heav'nly grace,
In ev'ry utensil can find
Expression, gesture, action, mind,
Now burns with gen'rous zeal to teach
That love which he alone could reach,
And gets, lest pigmy words might flag,
A glossary from Brobdignag;

To preach in prose, or chant in rhyme,
Of furniture the true sublime,
And teach the ravish'd world the rules
For casting pans and building stools.
Poor Vulcan's gift, among the rest,
Is sold, and decks a mortal feast,
Bought by a goodly alderman,
Who lov'd his plate and lov'd his can;
And when the feast his worship slew,
His lady sold it to a Jew.
From him, by various chances cast,
Long time from hand to hand it past:—
To tell them all would but prolong
The ling'ring of a tiresome song;
Yet still it look'd as good as new,
The wearing prov'd the fabric true:
Now mine, perhaps, by Fate's decree,
Dear Lady R——, I send it thee;
And when the giver's days are told,
And when his ashes shall be cold,
May it retain its pristine charm,
And keep with thee his mem'ry warm.

The following short poem, the hasty effusion of Mr. Curran's pen, was produced on this occasion: A party of gentlemen had dined with a friend; in the enjoyment of the table they became rather indulgent, and having continued till a late hour, it was proposed that they, according to their remaining powers, should produce something worthy of so happy a day.

Mr. Curran's contribution was given upon the spur of the moment in these verses:

TO SLEEP.

O Sleep, awhile thy power suspending,
Weigh not yet my eyelid down,
For Mem'ry, see! with eve attending,
Claims a moment for her own.
I know her by her robe of mourning,
I know her by her faded light;
When faithful with the gloom returning,
She comes to bid a sad good night.

Oh! let me hear, with bosom swelling,
While she sighs o'er time that's past;
Oh! let me weep, while she is telling
Of joys that pine, and pangs that last.
And now, O Sleep, while grief is streaming,
Let thy balm sweet peace restore,
While fearful Hope through tears is beaming,
Soothe to rest that wakes no more.

THE GREEN SPOT THAT BLOOMS ON THE DESERT OF LIFE.

1.

O'er the desert of life where you vainly pursu'd
Those phantoms of hope which their promise disown,
Have you e'er met some spirit divinely endu'd,
That so kindly could say you don't suffer alone?
And however your fate may have smil'd or have frown'd,
Will she deign still to share as the friend and the wife?
Then make her the pulse of your heart, for you've found
The green spot that blooms o'er the desert of life.

2.

Does she love to recal the past moments so dear,
When the sweet pledge of faith was confidingly giv'n,
When the lip spoke the voice of affection sincere,
And the vow was exchang'd and recorded in heav'n?
Does she wish to rebind what already was bound,
And draw closer the claim of the friend and the wife?
Then make her the pulse of your heart, for you've found
The green spot that blooms o'er the desert of life.

Mr. Curran's parliamentary life is so interwoven with the history of his country, that on it I purpose to subjoin whatever may be most interesting. On principle he became early attached to the Whigs, and to them, through all the undulations of a very varied fortune, he adhered with constancy. His career was not so distinguished in the senate as in the courts of justice. His business in the hall, till the period at which it was interrupted by the occasion before related, was so extensive as to leave him little leisure for the cultivation of politics. His mind consequently was not furnished with all the deep erudition necessary to perfect the practical statesman; but to an intimate acquaintance with the laws and the constitution of his country, he added a great knowledge of all the obliquities of human character, and with the acquired stock of literature, and his facility of public speaking, he marched always in the first ranks of the opposition.

The fire of his genius, the caustic of his invective, his wit, which some one calls the wine of the intellect, and the detestation in which he held the slightest encroachment on the rights of the subject, were themes which he dwelt on with singular success. He connected himself with Mr. George Ponsonby, since Lord High Chancellor of Ireland, who at the time of Mr. Curran's junction was among the principal popular leaders in the opposition, and though Mr. Curran was solicited by the court, he refused to become one of the chief law officers, and was ever considered by his party, and by his country, as an independent and an honest public man. On the coming in of the opposition he succeeded Sir Michael Smith as Master of the Rolls.. This office it is thought he accepted under feelings of much chagrin, as it was said, he conceived himself better qualified for the King's Bench or for the office of Attorney General. This disappointment and some minor arrangements in the under departments of the office, produced some interruption to the long friendship which had subsisted between him and Mr. Ponsonby, which is variously related ; but Mr. Curran paid the last homage of respect to Mr. Ponsonby, and frequently visited him in his last hours. After a few years, he retired from the Rolls on a pension, with the reputation of being an upright judge.

Here he was succeeded by Sir William M'Mahon, a gentleman of great experience whilst at the bar, of considerable learning in his profession, and whose assiduity to business, dispatch, and integrity, have eminently qualified him (yet a young man) to discharge with great advantage to the public the arduous duties of his high station.

At the bar Mr. Curran was a firm assertor of the rights with which he was intrusted: he was also kind and generous in drawing forth and encouraging talent. The first efforts of genius he thought, if frozen or dismayed, might be thrown back into despair; and he certainly not only assisted youth in its early advances, but frequently sustained it, when it wanted the props of his superior experience and knowledge. Never disdaining to take a suggestion, he was equally liberal to communicate one; nor am I apprised that he ever, in any one instance, oppressed the hope, or marred the prosperity of any one of his numerous competitors; or that he ever, from motives of personal interest, or resentment, stood in the way of any man's advancement, whispered down his reputation, or descended to combination, compact, or solicitation. Those who knew him best assert, that they are quite certain he never did so. In his profession he preserved an unsullied reputation for integrity, and was always considered to be among the proudest champions of its rights and privileges.

In those sad and perilous times which had befallen us in the rebellion of 1798, he defended many of the leaders with the utmost and most undaunted intrepidity; and in times so heated, he was frequently exposed to dangers; his words and actions were watched, and they certainly did not give him fresh odour at the Castle. It is said, that to Lord Kilwarden's friendship he was indebted for not being more than suspected, but never on any grounds but from the confidence and the secrets deposited with the advocate. His noble friend, however, placed his loyalty above imputation.

In defence of Oliver Bond, he attacked Reynolds, the informer, by whose evidence the prosecution was to be sustained, with all the vehemence and acerbity of invective. The cross-examination of this witness was conducted with the utmost ingenuity; and, in Mr. Curran's bold and manly statement in behalf of his client, there will be found exquisite touches of the predominating genius of the advocate, and some of the most powerful appeals to the feelings. Of this man (Reynolds,) Mr. Curran has afterwards been heard to declare, that his heart was so indurated and gnarled, that it was not in the arm of man to drive a wedge into it; it required the edge of the sword, or the force of machinery, to rive it asunder.

The following is the speech of John Philpot

Curran, Esq. in defence of Mr. Oliver Bond, for High Treason, on Tuesday, July 24th, 1798 :

"Gentlemen of the Jury, let me state to you in the clearest point of view the defence of the prisoner at the bar, and see what has been the nature of the evidence adduced. The prisoner at the bar is accused of compassing or imagining the death of the king, and of adhering to the king's enemies; the evidence against him is *parol* and *written* evidence. Now, gentlemen of the jury, I will venture to observe to you, that as to the *written* evidence, if suffered to go before you by the court, it is only as evidence at large; but as to the credibility of it, that is for you to decide upon. Mr. Reynolds, in his parol testimony, has sworn that he was made an United Irishman by the prisoner at the bar. Mr. Reynolds says he was sworn to what he considered to be the *objects* of that society; he stated them to you; but whether true or false is for you to determine by the credit you may give to his testimony. This is the third time Mr. Reynolds has appeared in a court of justice to prosecute the prisoners. He says, the *objects* of the United Irishmen are to overturn the present government, and to establish a republican form of government in its stead, and to comfort and abet the French on their invading this kingdom, should such an event take place. You have heard his testimony; let me ask, do you think him incapable of being a villain? do you think him to be a villain? You observed with what kind of pride he gave his testimony,—do you believe his evidence by the solemn oath that you have taken? or do you believe it was a blasted perjury? Can you give credit to a man of a blasted character? It has been the misfortune of many former jurors to have given their verdict founded upon the evidence of a perjured witness, and on their death-bed they repented of their credulity in convicting a man upon false testimony. The history of former ages is replete with such conduct; as may be seen in the State Trials, in the case of Lord Kimbolton and Titus Oates—the then jurors convicted that nobleman, but some time after his death the jurors discovered they had given implicit credit to a witness unworthy of it; and the lawyers of those times might have said, "I thank God they have done the deed." Does not the history of human infirmity give many instances of this kind? Gentlemen, let me bring you more immediately to the case before you; had we no evidence against Reynolds but his own solitary evidence, from the whole of his evidence you cannot establish the guilt of the prisoner at the bar. Take the whole of his evidence into your consideration; it may appear he is unworthy of credit. He told you he got information from M'Cann on the Sunday morning, that the meeting was to be on Monday morning at ten o'clock—Reynolds goes immediately to Mr. Cope, and gives him that information—on Sunday afternoon he goes to Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and shews him the orders issued by Captain Saurin to the lawyers corps: then, said Lord Edward, I fear government intend to arrest me, I will go to France, and hasten them to invade this country. Government has no information of the meeting of the provincial delegates at Bond's; no, no, says Reynolds, that is impossible—Reynolds wrote to Bond he could not attend the meeting, as his wife was ill—Reynolds did not go to the meeting.—Bond was arrested on the Monday morning; on Monday evening at eight at night Reynolds goes to Lord Edward in Angier-street, met him, and goes again to him the next night, and Lord Edward conversed with Reynolds about his (Lord Edward) going to France. Reynolds then went to Kildare; he gave the most solemn assurance to the delegates at a meeting there that he never gave information of the meeting at Bond's. Now see how many oaths

Reynolds has taken; he admits he took two of the oaths of the obligations to the society of United Irishmen. He told you Lord Edward advised him to accept of being a colonel of the Kildare United Irishmen's army, and yet he says he afterwards went to Bond's, and Bond advised Reynolds to be a colonel. It appeared in evidence that Reynolds was treasurer; he took two more oaths, one as colonel, and one as treasurer; and he took the oath of allegiance also, and he took an oath to the truth of his testimony at the two former trials and at this:—On which do you give him credit? Gentlemen, in order to narrow the question under your consideration, as to what Reynolds said relative to Lord Edward's conversation, is totally out of this case; it can have no weight at all on the trial of Mr. Bond for high treason in the finding of your verdict. How, or in what manner, is the prisoner at the bar to be affected by it? I submit to your lordship that the declaration of Lord Edward to Reynolds, when Bond was not present, is not attachable to the prisoner. Mr. Reynolds has given you a long account of a conversation he had with Mr. Cope relative to the proceedings of the society of United Irishmen; and Mr. Cope said if such a man could be found, as described by Reynolds, who would come forward and give information, he would deserve the epithet of saviour of his country. Thus by Reynolds's evidence, it would seem that Mr. Cope was the little pony of repentance to drive away the gigantic crimes of the *colossus Reynolds.*—But remember, said Mr. Reynolds, though I give information I won't sacrifice my morality; I won't come forward, to prosecute any United Irishman. No, no, like a bashful girl, higgling about the price of her virginity, I am determined, says Reynolds, to preserve my character.—I will give the communications; but do not think I will descend to be an informer. I will acquaint you of every thing against the

United Irishmen, but I must preserve my credit.—I tell you the design of the United Irishmen is to overturn the constitution;—I will lead you to the threshold of discovery;—but I won't name any price for reward. Pray don't mention it at all, says Mr. Cope, a man would deserve a thousand or fifteen hundred a year and a seat in parliament, or any thing, if he could give the information you mention. No such thing is required, no such thing, says Reynolds, you mistake me; I will have nothing in the world, but merely a compensation for losses! Do you think I would take a bribe? I ask only of you, to give me leave to draw a little bit of a note on you, for five hundred guineas; only by way of indemnity, that is all,—merely for indemnity of losses I have sustained or am liable to sustain. Gentlemen of the jury, don't you see the vast distinction, between a bribe and a gratification? What says father Foigard? Consider my conscience, do you think I would take a bribe? it would grieve my conscience if I were to take a bribe—to be a member of parliament and declare for the ayes or the noes!—I will accept of no bribe—I will only take a little indemnity for claret that may be spilt; for a little furniture that may be destroyed; for a little wear and tear; for boots and for shoes; for plate destroyed; for defraying the expenses of some pleasurable jaunts, when out of this country; for if I become a public informer against the United Irishmen, and should continue here for some time, I may chance at some time to be killed by some of them; for I have sworn to be true to them, and I also took the oath of allegiance to be true to my sovereign. I have taken all sorts of oaths; if I frequent the company of those who are loyal to the king, they will despise the man who broke his oath of allegiance; and between the Loyalist and the United Irishmen, I may chance to be killed.—As I am in the habit of living in the world, says Mr. Reynolds to Mr. Cope, you will give me leave to draw a bit of paper on you, only for three hundred guineas at present; it will operate like a bandage to a sore leg; though it won't cure the sore or the rottenness of the bone, it may hide it from the public view. I will, says Mr. Reynolds, newly be baptised for a draft of three hundred guineas, and become a public informer; and for a further bit of paper,—only for another two hundred guineas—yet I trust you will excuse me,—I will not positively take any more. He might, I imagine, be compared to a bashful girl, and say, What shall the brutal arms of man attack a country maid, and she not stipulate for full wages; when her gown shortens, and her apron bursts asunder; and she sinks to the view of public prostitution; perhaps, he practised upon her virtue, when she thought he was gaining the affections of that innocent dupe in private life. Do you think that Reynolds would touch a bribe, and become an informer?—No, no, he said he would be no informer.—But did he not consent to do a little business in private?—and did he not get money for it? Perhaps he said, I thought to be no villain;—I would not have the world think me a villain! Yet as I can confide in myself, why should I mind what the world says of me, though it should call me villain? But it is not a real fact; even though I should become the talk of all the porter-houses, though I should become the talk at all the tea-tables, yet perjury is not brought home to me. No! no human being has knowledge of what is rankling within! Has it not been said, I was an honest man, to come upon the public board as a public informer? They did call me an honest man, and a worthy, a respectable informer, and thus my character is at bay. The world indeed heard of the progress of these crimes, and that I was unfortunately an United Irishman. He told you there was a *provincial* meeting of delegates, but he has not ventured to tell you where the *provincial committee* met; he has simply said there was a provincial committee.—It was a question of great concern, I have deeds of men are visited upon them, and that such are spurned at with contempt, and are hissed from the great theatre of human acting, we then see opinion, the greatest sanction of virtue, in full activity; there, the *agremens* are not permitted to rise above, and gild the vice, as in France, where, too often, virtue is flung into the back ground, and what is agreeable is brought forward into relief. While this truly British sentiment gives honour to a nation, it also gives vigour and permanency to all its social establishments: the moment a people lose *this* fine tact, and can breathe the impurity of a corrupting atmosphere, the vitality even of its liberties becomes endangered; its soundness rapidly runs into decay, and its main timbers begin to rot. Whenever public delicacy can once endure to be tainted, so as not indignantly to repel the first approaches of irreverence to modesty, the great land-marks of propriety soon become effaced, and all that a proud and fastidious people justly value themselves upon, begin to perish. The conversation over the bottle, too indulgent on such topics, is happily found not to stray beyond its own confines; society suffers little by it. The hot-bed by which it is produced consumes itself in its own fermentation, but the wit produced by this indulgence is frequently of such a character that it often possesses the most pointed allusions, and touches of novelty and of nature, which those who have curiosity in this way, may seek in the polluted pages, in the licentious records of the Second Charles, in the impious wit of a Rochester, and the disgraceful anecdotes of a Nell Gwynne; but such have found little encouragement in the reign of George the Third; nor in this island of saints will any Irishman be found to regret omissions, which, if transmitted, might diminish the fame of their countryman.

It is related of Dryden, that in conversation he was sluggish and saturnine, and his biographer remarks, "There are men whose powers operate only at leisure and in retirement, and whose intellectual vigour deserts them in conversation, whom merriment confuses and objection disconcerts, whose bashfulness restrains their exertions, and suffers them not to speak till the time of speaking be past, and whose attention to their own character makes them unwilling to utter at hazard what has not been considered, and cannot be recalled."

Mr. Curran was the reverse of all this,—seldom silent, never barren; had he never uttered one piece of eloquence, had no one of his orations been preserved, such was the curious felicity of his conversation, (and he could also be a good listener,) that by it alone he might have secured his immortality. In the most animated and captivating flow of his wit and humour, he well knew what was due to others; amidst the glow of his most brilliant effusions in private company, no sting remained on the wounded nerve of any person: perfectly unoffending, he left no one pained by his poignancy; but all who heard him retired, as from a feast, in admiration of the entertainment.

The foregoing reflections on the nature of his mind may furnish some solution of the inequality between the written and spoken productions of Mr. Curran; the habits of public speaking, and the excitements of universal admiration before noticed, called forth all the energies of his soul: these elicited all the fire of his genius; but in solitude and retirement he courted repose; there he became unambitious, and, seeking amusement alone, he stretched his intellects and his limbs: the coolness of the grotto, the silence of the shade, were seldom invaded by the irradiations of his own splendor.

In some of his *sombre* moods, when he became the moralising Jacques, whether he sketched the views of life, of manners, or of nature, there was something delightful, though frequently mixed with the *bizarre*.

Walking one evening in autumn, in Saint James's Park, accompanied by Mr. Charle

Philips, celebrated equally for his eloquence as for his poetry, there suddenly came on a violent tempest, which rived the gnarled oak, and shook the leaves, and strewed them over the walks, as thick as those in Vallombroso, which Mr. Curran remarking, said, "My dear friend, observe here; we are desired by philosophy to take lessons from Nature; yet how foolishly does she seem to act on the present occasion; she flings away her blessings and her decorations; she is at this moment very busy in stripping those defenceless trees, at the approach of winter and of cold, at that very season when they most want covering."

An instance of his attractions in conversation occurred in passing over the ferry at Conway to Caernarvon; two ladies were seen riding down the hills, on ponies, attended by a servant, all hastening to the boat; the morning was fine, the tide full in, and the towers and lofty battlements of the birth-place of Richard Cœur de Lion, gilded with the morning sun, seized upon the imagination, and filled it with all the raptures of romance. Mr. Curran was accompanied by two friends, his countrymen and fellow travellers, on a journey to London*. One of the ladies, who was Irish, had sought shelter in retirement, from matrimonial strife, amidst the mountains of Wales, much injured, for ladies will have it so.

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* The editor was one of them.

By placing seas and mountains between her and her husband, as safer boundaries of separation than fiddle cases, or deeds indented and enrolled; she felt security in those wilds. Alighting hastily, she soon after joined, and came into the boat with her friend; the former, who was a native of the county of Down, was struck very much by Mr. Curran's observations, and turning round, asked one of his companions, who that agreeable gentleman was; on being informed, she lifted her eyes upward, and said, "Good God! have I the good fortune to be in the company of that extraordinary person, of whom I have all my life been hearing so much?" On the passage to the inn, she was observed to hold some private conversation with her companion, and it appeared from what had afterwards taken place, that she wished her friend to enjoy the freak of the first stage, and of Mr. Curran's pleasantries; the latter declined it, and staid back, waiting the return of her friend. The other of Mr. Curran's companions, (a wicked wit, and who was well qualified to play a second part, and enjoy his own joke,) threw open to the orator's vanity the allurement to exertion, by a disclosure of the motive of her accompanying him. Breakfast, and the exhilarating restorative of tea, had no such power of excitement on him, as the assurance and conviction that she followed the ark from the happiness she derived from being in the company of him she so much thought of: this produced all it was calculated to effect; the mercury rose in the glass, and settled from variable to fine weather, with more constancy than it was ever before observed to be fixed at. The lady's health became endangered from excess of laughter. The first stage over, there appeared an evident contest in her breast, whether she would continue to yield to this delicious captivity, go on and enjoy, or go back to her fretting companion, and mope with her moans; she broke down under the force of intellectual gratification, and for ninety miles, that pure spirit lived on the rapture of his wit.

The philosophy which declares that to be happy is to be wise, became her conductor, and, obedient to it, she rejected the meaner calculations of possible exhaustion and of certain impropriety: how far it was prudent to extend pleasure on such a sliding scale, or where the power of retraction and retrocession should begin, she never paused to consider. She had nothing, however, to regret, or which could have caused one uneasy sensation. Till two o'clock in the morning she continued, and then retired to revive in dreams those delightful reflections which her mind seemed so capable to enjoy.

The constitutional malady of which he complained was no more, no less, than *ennui*. The character of his disposition was generally cheerful, whenever his mind had employment, and society afforded the best relief; there he resumed his merriment and playfulness; there it was that he flung great masses of light on half-irradiated subjects; and there it was that, instead of darkening gloominess, he illuminated each surrounding object.

Speaking of the profession of the law, he compared the hope of success to the gamut of the musicians; he said, one should gather his strength and begin with the low notes; and this he illustrated by saying, "It reminded him of a cunning barber, who began his trade by shaving a beggar, in the hope that one day or other he would rise to shave a duchess."

On familiar subjects, down to the common concerns of low life, he had as intimate a knowledge as Swift or Morland. They are said to have visited the receptacles of indigence and of vice, for the purpose of obtaining an acquaintance with human nature in those forms. He did obtain that knowledge without the sacrifices of such condescension, which can be well conceived from an anecdote of Fenelon (or Bossuet), who is said to have painted vice as if he had been habitually intimate with practical depravity. Being asked by a friend, how it was that he, whose life was pure, innocent, and simple, could so accurately pourtray vices which he had never seen? To this the pious preacher replied, "My friend, you little know how familiar the images of vice are, even to the most virtuous minds." Thus, Mr. Curran could have written High Life below Stairs, without intermixing with the servants, and he could have furnished hints to the dramatic writer of comedy, in all the richness and copiousness of its best originals.

A proper officer of the name of Halfpenny, holding a profitable employment in one of the courts of justice, consequently self-important, officious, and noisy, forgetting the reverence due to eloquence, and possessing no higher qualities than the bustle of business and the love of gain, conceived himself entitled, from these endowments, to give great disturbance to Mr. Curran, whilst engaged in advocating the great interests of his client in some important case. Intense thought or feeling brooks not brutal interruption; he intreated the officer to be quiet, but in vain; Halfpenny rose behind the desk, and was still troublesome; no importunity of politeness could reduce him to silence; Mr. Curran at length complained to the court, and said, "There was no redress for him but one, and begged their lordships would *nail* that *rap* to the counter."

So erratic and desultory are the wanderings of genius, that it becomes very difficult to reduce its workings under any direct or regular heads, so as to give to them that classification, which inanimate matter so patiently yields to.

The metaphysical mineralogist must make many efforts, before he can hope to arrange them; yet, in the glitter of this confusion, the real metals are still sufficiently distinguishable. Nor could the most lucid order convey to the mind more distinctness by any artificial position of the parts, or of fragments collected loosely, and at different times and under different circumstances, than by those detachments which have now, for the first time, been called in from country quarters. It therefore may be objected to this performance, (with some slight variations,) as it was to Savage's, that the disposition of the parts is irregular, that anecdotes and images, however beautiful, succeed each other without order; and that the whole work is not so much a regular fabric, as a heap of shining materials thrown together by accident, which strikes rather with the magnificence of a ruin, than the elegant grandeur of a finished pile. If this criticism applies with justice, the apology is, that though it be composed of scattered rays, not compact masses of light, yet in the union of the parts there is a distinctness and separation: that each subdivision stands on its own ground;

and that, unlike a castle of cards, no one part is necessary to the support of the fabric. Were anecdotes strictly, consecutively, and rigidly related, the associations would necessarily induce weariness; while, broken up as they are, the reader gets refreshed by novelty and unexpected transitions.

In the cross examination of witnesses, Mr. Curran's scrutiny was tremendous. Instinctive and intuitive as Shakespear, he knew all the fastnesses, passes, and windings of the human heart, into which truth seeks to retire and to conceal itself. He knew all the weaknesses, the passions of hope and of fear, of interest and of resentment; and such was his knowledge of human nature, and so much was he in her confidence, that he silently inhaled all the operations of the villain he would expose; dragged Cacus from his cave, penetrated into the mysteries of hell, and threw open to the common observer the secrets of those dark regions. Keen and ardent in the pursuit, he was always sure of his game; eager and intrepid in the chase, he was ever in at the death; whether playful or severe, he never relaxed; whether his weapon was ridicule, or open and direct attack; whether it was the power of reason cutting through a weak and fluttering conscience, his edge was unerring: the mole which hid its head in the earth, he perceived by the kicking of its feet; when it could see nothing, it thought itself secure and unseen. If truth lay at the bottom of her well, he plunged in, and plucked up drowned honour by the locks; or did she escape to the mountain top, he wound round its slopes and gained its heights with the activity of an Arab warrior. He had the power to elicit it from the flint; and by his touch, as if with a wand, he caused it to gush forth from the hardest rock. It may justly be said of him, that "The Gordian knot of it he could untie familiar as his garter." Jurors latterly began to doubt themselves, and to be frighted at the magic of his address; while he who bore false witness against his neighbours was often seen, like Festus, to have trembled. In variety and effect in this department of his profession he was unrivalled, and *sola sicca secum spatiatur ardua.*

In the case of Flood and Flood, he made the most extraordinary use of two silly sounds. *Billy Booth* was the name of the witness; and in contrasting that name with that of the illustrious Henry Flood, associated, as it was, with all the ideas of greatness, and in the ridicule which this contrast afforded, slight as may appear the material, he produced continued peals of laughter; and on this occasion his imitations of the Irish priest were as just as O'Reilly's "Father Luke," and were exquisitely dramatic.

An English gentleman, who had been some time in Mr. Curran's company, and who so much admired him that, by an insensible imitation, he fell into his manner of conversation and style of expression, and copied both so closely, that he declared he felt himself eloquent for a month after he had left him; and that on his return to England, his friends perceiving the alteration both in the manner and the spirit of his delivery, began to entertain serious apprehensions for the safety of his understanding, he declared that it took him much time and trouble to convince them that he was not deranged. *Such terrible impression made this dream, that for a season after he could not but believe but that, he was an orator.*

Mr. Burke relates an anecdote of a Frenchman, who, when he wished to obtain an insight into the real character of any person he desired to study, began to adapt his features to the gestures and manner of the other; and conceiving that the mind gave a truth of expression to them distinct from words, he could thus obtain a clue to the genuine movements of the heart; perhaps the gentleman here alluded to may have had some similar conceit.

Speaking of the supineness of government, while the fire of rebellion was not yet extinguished, but raked over, he observed they were like the silly sea-boy, who thought that during the time he slept, the ship ceased to move.

In parliament, on the debate of an important question, involving some of the deepest interests of his country; perceiving the house to be very thinly attended, he rose: and after many arguments and observations, he at length demanded in a commanding tone of voice of the Speaker;—"Where are the members? have they not been summoned? It seems then," said he, "they are not forthcoming; perhaps at this very moment, they may be found chained in couples in the kennel, or under the management of the ministers' secretary."

Enthusiastically fond of music, he perceived at a rehearsal, one of those Roderigos or foolish gentlemen, who haunt concerts and oratorios, busy and bustling, ordering and disordering every thing: vexed with the popinjay, he observed to a friend,—"Mark that fellow, he is like the fool who blows the bellows for the organist, and because he does so, he thinks it is himself who performs upon the instrument."

Some gentlemen of his most intimate acquaintance, who have lived with him in his happiest hours, have declared that they conceived the human mind elevated beyond its usual dimensions by his observations; and that they, by taking thought, felt as if a cubit were added to their intellectual stature.

Such value did he set on the due organization of matter, that he thought mind either was it, or depended so much on it, that he has been often heard to say, (perhaps but in pleasantry,) that the best preparation he could make for an arduous trial before a jury was, to take a fox-chase the day before; and in this way he considered occasional idleness as the best food for genius. Yet, whenever he gave his attention to the driest and most abstruse parts of the law, he was found equal to the most recondite principles; and these, coming through such a medium, like the rusty armour of antiquity, acquired a polish of which they were supposed to be incapable. I might instance his argument in Smith and Morgan, as one of the many illustrations of what on such occasions he could so well perform.

On grave or solemn subjects, his excessive activity did not allow him to dwell longer than till he conceived he had exhausted them; he then bounded to those meads of asphodel, where he had luxuriance without limits; and here it was he ranged at large, and rioted in all the exuberance of his own fancy, He often lamented his love of pleasantry; adding, that his jokes cost him 500*l.* a-year; by which it is to be understood that, in the profession, he would have made that sum in addition, had he extinguished that delightful propensity; but he did not account for the early profits, or that they had helped him forward to his elevation.

A prudence, almost Scottish, directed the management of his private and domestic concerns: the recollections of his early life, and of its privations, probably fixed those notions of œconomy in his mind, and his habits confirmed them. In all the indulgences of gaiety, amidst all the gratifications of pleasure, this domestic deity was never found to desert him. Scrupulously just in his dealings, having no vanity of expense, he accumulated a respectable, if not a considerable personal fortune. His acquisitions in land were nothing that could be heard of but his residence at Rathfarnham, with its surrounding demesne, and the Priory in the county of Cork, which has been before noticed.

The lines of Denham on Strafford, give much of the character of his eloquence.

“ His wisdom such, at once it did appear
“ Three kingdoms' wonder, and three kingdoms' fear;
“ While single he stood forth, and seem'd although
“ Each had an army, and an equal foe.
“ Such was his force of eloquence to make
“ The hearers more concern'd than he that spake.
“ Each seem'd to act that part he came to see,
“ And none was more a looker on than he.

"So did he move our passions, some were known
"To wish, for the defence, the crime their own.
"Now private pity strove with public hate,
"Reason with rage, and eloquence with fate."

Whatever criticism may have torn from him,—however mutilated he may have been by the shallowness or inaccuracy of his reporters, his effect has been as described; in one comparatively subordinate power of mind, so frequently mistaken for genius or high understanding, he manifested taste in almost every subject connected with literature. His skill in music made him attentive to the structure and harmony of his periods. He well knew that eloquence charmed the ear, and opened the widest entrance to the heart; and he studied with great earnestness the principles of this art. So fastidious was he of pedantry, that, amidst his profuse quotations from the ancient classics, he studiously avoided this error; when he used them, they were employed as powerful illustrations, or beautiful ornaments. He was one of those few scholars who stripped literature of that affectation which encumbers it; he broke and flung away the husk and shell by which it is too frequently surrounded; and his delicacy fused the original sentiments into his native language, enriching both by the medium through which both were delivered. You drank the Falernian in all its richness and raciness. You looked not to the musty casks of antiquity for the mark of the consulate, in which it had been stored; but you got it defæcated and poured forth in profusion into the clear modern glass, sparkling and mantling in all the purple colours, and in all the odour and flavour of its best vintage. To this exquisite delicacy of taste Mr. Curran had not an exclusive title; in the fine and cultivated mind of Mr. Bushe, redolent with classics, he may have found a rival.

To any one person it must be denied to have had such continued and uninterrupted intercourse with Mr. Curran, as to cull all the flowers which he was ever throwing forth with exuberant spontaniety. On some errand of this kind Proserpine was caught, and she accordingly suffered. This garland may, however, stimulate to fresh gathering; and some future collector may be more fortunate to gratify his country, by a greater diffusion of information concerning a person, whose character of mind, (for that merely is here under consideration,) by universal consent, they consider to be among the most extraordinary productions of this island, for ever teeming with great names; a country certainly possessing considerable powers of justly appreciating such peculiar excellencies of mind; and fitted to enjoy the rarest gifts of genius. If we lost a Moore, we gained an Anacreon; if we did not enjoy a

Sheridan, we do his immortality; if a Burke be no more, his great works survive: but what memorial for Mr. Curran, except what, together with his speeches, may grow out of some better effort which this may generate?

It was reserved for the present day to obtain the full length picture of Swift; and some future Scott may enlarge the frame, and spread upon the canvas a more perfect likeness than the present outline.

Mr. Curran was in person rather under the middle stature; his frame wiry, yet muscular; and, though the countenance was not prepossessing, yet it was redeemed by the eye, which was full of fire and energy; and might be likened to that of Coriolanus, which *could have pierced a corslet.* He often said it would cost him half an hour more to get at the heart of his hearer, than it would a handsome man. He was always pleasant on the subject of defect of beauty; and, when in parliament, turned it very happily against another member. One of the messengers brought in an unsealed note from the door of the house, hastily written, and not addressed to any person. Mr. Curran looked at the back of the paper, and observed, that it was not for him; and asked why he had handed it to him? The messenger answered, by saying, the gentleman who had given it to him was at the door; that he pointed at Mr. Curran, and desired him to give it to the ugliest gentleman in the house: he directly pointed to the other side, and desired him to give it to Mr. . . . . . . for it was for him it was intended. His invitations to dinner were in his own peculiar way—"I shall try to be an agreeable *shay* companion for the few hours we travel together; but if you do stop for the night, I do undertake to promise you the driest bed, and the wettest bottle."

The distance at which a young man just called to the bar is placed from those who have established great reputation, is felt with modesty. The young man scarcely thinks himself a barrister for some time. Of this Mr. Curran frequently made a pleasant use, by addressing them in salutation, or otherwise: "How do you do, Counsellor?" or, "Will you take a glass of wine with me, Counsellor?"

When Mr. Grady of Belmont, the author of the "Barrister" and other poems, had published his celebrated poem of "the Nosegay," in which Mr. Bruce, a wealthy banker of the city of Limerick, was satirized with all the vigour and virulence of a Churchill, and all the poignancy of a Pope; Mr. Curran was waited upon by the poet, and earnestly solicited once more to appear as counsel, in an action brought for a libel by Mr. Bruce against Mr. Grady. All the topics of persuasion (amongst these the promise of being immortalized in verse) were exhausted to induce him, and it was flatteringly insinuated, that the public expectation ran so high, that it was earnestly hoped he would fling a departing ray on his setting, as glowing and warm and luminous, as when he shone forth in noon-tide radiance. He had retired from the Rolls Court for some time before, and, though urged by the additional motive of personal and early intimacy with the defendant, and pressed on by the authority of Anthony Malone, who had appeared at the bar after having been a judge, he was at length waited upon by the agent of Mr. Grady. At this renewed solicitation he did not appear to have been perfectly in good humour, and he observed that the expectation of his re-appearing at the bar was quite idle; nor could it be for one moment imagined, that he could lend himself to drive a wedge into a human heart already so rent and torn asunder.

For the many years of his practice in the hall, his wit made an æra; there went by no day that did not furnish something new from him. The young and old of the bar were so fascinated with his effusions, that they got rapid circulation; they were echoed through the courts, and did, like sound, propagate themselves in every direction. You had them in the streets, and at the table; they were as certainly supplied, and made as necessary a part of the entertainment, as the wine; they travelled with you into the country; they were domesticated every where; they pleased youth and delighted old age." When he left the practice of his profession, he did not leave the hall. He frequently descended from the bench, and distracted in groups of admirers his over active and over ardent mind.

He was visited, as he called it, by a constitutional malady, and he sought refuge in his early friendships; thus among the young men of his profession, whom he always favoured, and amidst the recollections of first impressions and associations, he found occasional relief, and imparted certain delight. Doubtless he must have largely contributed to the diffusion of literature among them; and he felt delighted in drawing forth the seeds which nature had so bountifully scattered among them. Unrestrained and open, he generously poured upon them the rich and refreshing streams of his conversational eloquence, of his professional experience, and in a degree may have fixed upon them that stamp and character for fine taste and for literature, for which they have been so eminently distinguished. To be prepared for the enjoyment of his mind, it became necessary to be stored with considerable attainments. These, and the emulation of at least not being so distanced as not to ride near enough to enjoy the competition and the race, gave speed and mettle to the slow-paced. The quickness of his apprehension was distributed among them; and he had the peculiar felicity that his attention never deserted him. He was present to every object, and regardful of the most trifling occurrences; he had the art of accommodating himself to every new scene.

To some of these characteristics of Savage, as noticed by Johnson, there were in Mr. Curran very close resemblances. Johnson says of the former, " His mind was in an uncommon degree vigorous and active, his judgement was accurate, his apprehension quick, and his memory so tenacious, that he was frequently observed to know what he had learned from others in a short time better than those by whom he was informed; and could frequently recollect incidents, with all their combinations of circumstances, which few could have regarded at the present time."

His judgement was eminently exact, both with regard to writings and to men: the knowledge of life was indeed among his great attainments; and it is not without some satisfaction that I can produce the suffrage of (Mr. Curran) in favour of human nature, of which he never appeared to entertain such odious ideas as some, who perhaps had neither his judgement nor experience, have published either in ostentation of their sagacity, vindication of their crimes, or gratification of their malice.

There appears to exist a perpetual contention between two divisions of the human mind—one claims the palm of judgement, the other that of imagination and wit. To one is said to belong the power of discrimination and separation, to the other that of combination, and of creating shapes in endless variety. One declares that wisdom is in its right hand, the other holds its sovereignty over the vast domains of pleasure. So essential and deeply rooted is the jealousy mutually entertained, that the slightest invasion of territory from one or the other produces immediate hostility; yet they run into each other, and intermix as the river and the tide of the ocean. The physical and numerical force is on the one side, while the aristocracy of talent is all on the other; "each neighbour abuses his brother." It is a perennial stream of discord, which flows and ever will flow on. The rustic may be stopped in his way, hoping it may pass by, but he is deceived—the elements of division are eternal, and resemble the Scottish feuds: the Highlander clings to his native mountains, and holds the Lowlanders in contempt. If imagination comprehends invention, which discovers by its excursive powers the middle terms that prove the agreement or disagreement of things, it contains the faculty of judgement if it will stop to exercise it; if it does not, it may gather all the sweets of Hybla, riot in the cowslip's bell; but fruitless are its excursions if it does not return and deposit in the proper cell the honey which it gathers. Its loudest note may charm the ear of summer, and sing the fairy song, "Merrily! merrily!" while the plain ox, with honest, harmless, guileless labour, crowns the field with all the pomp of harvest.

The truth appears to be, that neither make just allowances: the plodding man takes strong holds of his subject, lays up with care what he collects with labour, and thus his claims are generally well founded. Successful mediocrity is incurable in its obstinacy; its acquisitions are accompanied by the curse of fancy; and when animated by conceit becomes offensive by vanity, or ridiculous by assumption. It resembles prosperous vulgarity highly animalized with spirits; it exaggerates its own powers, and, stilting and pluming itself, it struts in the fashion it would reduce; it flutters and buzzes about the light by which it is consumed: the only warmth it feels is in a heartburning. Envy and dulness, belonging to a large family, become formidable by their following;

whereas genius, on the other side, must have a large space and territory assigned to it; whenever it shoots from its cliffs it can destroy the flocks of small birds which perch upon the mountain's base. To this strife Mr. Curran was often exposed, but he winged his flight to heights which from their inaccessibility gave him security.

Of Mr. Curran, and of him who lately led the English bar, it has been said, that neither were deeply read in the law; but it was impossible that either could be so regardless of the abilities of those they had to converse and contend with in their daily competition, as to have hazarded themselves by neglect of cultivation to the truth of this reproach: but envy was out on its errand, and must do something. Mr. Curran was not that dolt to conceive his mind to be like Fortunatus's purse, which was always to supply his demands and expenditure without ever putting any thing into it beforehand; for, as a pithy writer* observes, "Such a man may spread his native riches before ignorance, but he were better not to come to stress and trial with the skilful." When he studied his subject, which he did not do on every occasion, he might have said, *intus et in cute novi.*

By this ascendancy of one talent over another, or often by its more general exercise, the understanding is frequently misled by denying to it the reputation for graver acquirements, when, in truth, it often so happens that if imagination were totally deducted, and a blank left in its place, the same person may be entitled to a reputation for judgement and knowledge: the perfect union of both, and both regulated, afford the highest excellence.

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* Locke.

Bills of indictment had been sent up to a Grand Jury, in the finding of which Mr. Curran was interested. After delay and much hesitation, one of the Grand Jurors came into court to explain to the Judge the grounds and reasons why it was ignored. Mr. Curran, very much vexed by the stupidity of this person, said, " You, Sir, can have no objection to write upon the back of the bill, *ignoramus*, for self and fellow jurors; it will then be a *true* bill."

When the habeas corpus suspension act passed, some time before the year 1798, some person arguing for the propriety and necessity of that law, had thrown out doctrines and opinions unfavourable to the freedom of the constitution; he, whose countenance and doctrines were by no means agreeable to his hearers, was opposed by one of them, who said, " Were you incarcerated for six months under this law you so much extol, I should be glad to see how you would *look.*" On which Mr. Curran observed, " Perhaps he would not look a *bit the worse.*"

A member of the last Irish parliament, who had held one of the highest law offices under the crown, all on a sudden came over to that party who opposed the Union, voted against that measure, and lost his office, not without much regret. Some person speaking of his conduct on this occasion, extolled it highly, and observed, that he had made great sacrifices for his country's good, and had proved himself a sincere patriot. " Sincere! no," said Mr. Curran, " he is a *sorry* patriot."

A learned serjeant, whose promotion to the bench was daily expected, happened to be rather tedious in the statement of a case on trial before one of the chief judges, who, anxious for compression, observed to the serjeant, that when he came to administer justice, he would then know the value of time. A gentleman well known for his humour, and not having much esteem for the judge, in relating the matter, gave quite another turn to it by omitting the word administer; " When you come *to justice* you will *then* know the value of time."

Whenever any barrister is promoted, it is a rule on circuit that he shall send to the bar mess, at least a dozen of claret, to drink his health. A gentleman, not very much distinguished for ability, was recently appointed to one of the county chairs, and his claret was announced in these words:

"This is Mr. ——'s health, and may he live long to administer justice, as I am sure he will, *indifferently!*"

A barrister whom Mr. Curran very much esteemed for many amiable qualities, among others, for a fine temper and good nature, dining with him, was asked to be helped to green gooseberries and cream; he said he liked them very much, but feared, if he ate of them, he might be called, as Dr. Goldsmith was, a *gooseberry fool.* Mr. Curran said, "Take the gooseberries, my friend, and the milk of human kindness which so abundantly flows round your heart, will soon make a *fool* of them."

Mr. Curran frequently related anecdotes of priests: one of them had undertaken to explain to his congregation the wonderful narrative of Jonah; he had proceeded to a certain length, when he discovered that the name of the fish in which Jonah was deposited, was necessary to the conduct of his narrative. His memory totally failed him; he distinctly repeated the object of Jonah's mission, and all the other details; how the lot had been cast upon the prophet, and how he remained in the belly of this very great fish. "It must have been a very great fish," said he; "Oh! it was a marvellous fish!" The name did not come—he floundered on: "It could not be a haddock?" said the doctor; "No, that would be too small a fish to hold him; nor could it be an eel, that would be too comical; no, nor could it be a flat fish, for he could not fit in that." In this state of confusion, an old woman, staggering forward from an extreme corner of the chapel, was heard to exclaim, in a shrill tone of voice, "Perhaps it was a whale." The priest, quite enraged at the impiety of this intrusion, and confounded also by his own forgetfulness, cried out, "Get agone, you old b—h! you are damned, and you will be damned, for taking the word of the Lord out of your clergy's mouth."

A hot fool, plunged into distress, was playing at billiards, and having wagered his only guinea on the success of the game, became tremulously anxious on the last stroke of the ball; perceiving the clock giving notice to strike *one*, as he hoped, and fearing some distraction, he paused for a moment; another and another succeeded, till the clock went insensibly on to twelve. Thus suspended, his irritation increased,—he played and lost, and in his rage seizing the ball, drove it at the clock, with such fury and force, that he broke it in pieces: the owner sought compensation and obtained it. This being related in the presence of Mr. Curran, he observed, "That the damages should be very small, as the *clock struck first.*"

A beautiful young woman of the name of Serjeant, whose father was an officer of a yeomanry corps in Dublin, happened to pass Mr. Curran in the street; struck by her beauty, he inquired of a friend who she was, and being answered, that she was the lovely Miss Serjeant whom he had seen ten years before at Cheltenham—"What, not married yet? then I suppose her father will make her a *permanent* Serjeant."

From one of those Greek isles recently re-illumed by the vigorous and fascinating poetry of the most original writer of this century, a beautiful Smyrnese lady, perhaps sister to the Bride of Abydos, lately arrived in Dublin. To the repose and softness of her eye, the finely turned oval of her face, there were added a languishment of air, and a richness of dress, peculiar to those delicious climates, from which time has not despoiled them of every thing by despoiling them of freedom. Such were her charms, that she was followed in the public assemblies and in the streets, by crowds of admirers. Walking in one of the squares, she was perceived by a friend of Mr. Curran, who instantly exclaimed, "Oh! there is the beautiful woman from Smyrna, I must leave you for a moment to see her." Shortly after returning, he found Mr. Curran, who said, "Well, my friend, what say you, *Quid tibi visa Chios, quid Smyrna?*"

In selecting some of the foregoing passages from the speeches of Mr. Curran, perhaps I may be thought to have given them too copiously. If I have been led into error from the admiration of their excellencies, or from the impressions I received at their delivery, having had the good fortune to have heard most of them spoken with that accompanying force of energy and of action, such was the effect produced, that in taking the note of his speech in the case of Massy and Headfort, in which I was of counsel with him, I became suspended; the hand forgot its office, and, till roused from the delicious transport by some friend near me, I was not conscious that I left the paper unstained by any one note. On observing this circumstance to Mr. Curran in a few days after, he said, "Possibly at that very moment you were taking the best impression, perhaps then drinking deeply. It is probable it was then you were doing to me and yourself the greatest justice." On reflection, I believe it was as he had remarked. This in some degree tends to demonstrate, how much of their effect, beauty, and sublimity, must have been lost in the delight, how much by the rapidity of his flights, where much depended on a word.

His speeches, as now before the public, do not afford the just standards by which to measure their merits as delivered. One thing was always observable, that he never exhausted his subject; he never became languid, either by repetition or by barrenness. When another might be supposed to have ran the fountain dry, so productive were his powers, that he rose with fresh supplies, and came to the contest with renovated animation, with more vigorous reinforcements. He never forced the note of his mind too high, so as to deprive it of its tone, power, variety, or effect. His orations were peculiarly adapted to an Irish audience, and though he may have adapted his mind to the taste of his country, and it was wisdom to have done so, it was capable of expansion and adaptation to any audience: he was attic in the truest sense.

Under whatever imperfections these speeches have been sent abroad, they still afford manifest indications in many of their passages, (and I may add) proofs of the purest elegance. What invective has exceeded that delivered before the lord lieutenant and council in the case of Alderman Howison? Humanity is apt to throw itself into the condition of the abused, thinking the severity too much for man to endure. Its acerbity had a vigour and boldness which one should conceive to have been justified by the occasion. In part of the invective in defence of Hamilton Rowan, you meet something in the same style of conception, but rather on a lower key. Nothing can surpass the art and eloquence, the soothing and the softness of the address to Lord Avonmore, on the case of Judge Johnson—the tenderness in Massy *versus* Headfort; but when he comes to pay the tribute of respect to *British* freedom, and sounds the trumpet note, EMANCIPATION, its echo rings on the ear till its reverberation, and its sound, passing through the sense, strike on the heart, and there remain in eternal concord. All those who have heard him, lament the inattention he always manifested to his own fame, and those who best knew him, have made remarks upon the different effect produced by the reading and the speaking. In the combination of all his animal and intellectual powers, you had a full perception of all he could do; but the fire of the eye, the action which spoke before the lips were opened, these accompaniments are lost. His dialogue, in which he had a peculiar excellence, is lost. Possibly he was the only actor and dialoguist who succeeded in both. Many of those turns, points, and phrases, have been effaced or disfigured: they do not live; they are not retained. That death which has removed him from envy, may open to enquiry the nature of his claims to immortality, as a person of unrivalled genius. Even the superstitious admiration of antiquity, now that his ashes are in the grave of all the Capulets, cannot fail to rank him with the greatest names. In the torrent of praises which issued from the press on the event of his demise, it is a remarkable coincidence, that in three of those eloquent productions, coming from the pens of the most distinguished writers of this age, though written almost simultaneously, without concert or communication one with the other, they concur on all the material points of his excellence, and differ but little. Were it merely for the purpose of proving this, these valuable records, as well of friendship as of eloquence, are now preserved: they differ but little from the views here given; and from the continued authority of these concurrent testimonies, one irresistible truth appears, namely, that whatever may be otherwise said of him, (a subject with which I have early professed myself to have had no concern,) yet all agree in this,—that he was endowed with richer and rarer gifts of genius than in general fall to the lot of man to witness and to enjoy. If I have enthusiasm, it is in the admiration of that mind which was unequalled in its own peculiar character.

To other parts of his forensic speeches I might have adverted with advantage. In Ireland they are so familiar that it would be unbecoming to give to them an attention which has been already satisfied; but to England it might be a source of pleasure. I will not say that all of them, nor all parts of each will suit a taste, which, to enjoy, should come to an Irish level; but as they are before the public, and have been, those who are curious may recur to them not without pleasure.

Mr. Curran, strange to say, had some difference of opinion with some of his friends as to their comparative merits. He did occasionally flirt and coquette about them, and therefore it became difficult to ascertain his own exact opinion concerning them. He would freakishly put forward the merit of some one (little and seldom as he spoke of them) to examine the opinion of others upon them; and he sometimes selected the inferior samples, as well to judge of the character of the observer, as to see if they contained the excellence which they assentingly ascribed to them. Thus he often fought in ambush, and his double-barrelled gun seldom missed its mark.

Mr. Curran entertained opinions on many subjects which he expressed with openness. I have heard him some time after he was appointed

Master of the Rolls, animadvert with much severity of observation upon the altered character of man in his transit from Barrister to Judge, and ascribing the change not to suddenness, but to suppression of the real qualities from which the restraints were removed by the exaltation. He said, "I hope in God I shall not be found to exhibit myself in the Pantheon in so ludicrous or metamorphosed a figure. I neither seek the idolatry of a Pagan worship, nor do I covet that Ovid should revisit this earth to open a space for me among those fantastic beings he has so abused and elevated by his notice. I am not fond of such mythological glory: for my part, I hope I shall, like Arethusa, flow into that sea with waters fresh and pure. I have often thought of the rapid flight of those birds, who, wanting food in their own peculiar and native climates, get plump and frisky when they arrive, after a bad passage, upon a territory which nature did not assign to them. In their migration they sometimes discover, that, because they had taken wing, they have arrived at latitudes they never should have aspired to reach, but some trade-wind aided the shortness of their wing. It is great folly to sit, and bask, and flap, and pick one's feathers in this sort of fashion, in the hope of a false security, when the fowlers are out on the alert. I trust I shall be no such goose. I think that, merry as I may be, I should neither trade upon my jocularity, nor hope to convert jocularity into popularity. It is injudicious, perhaps dishonest: I do truly hope to avoid its coarseness, its meanness, and its folly. For my part, I hold the feelings of an educated gentleman as sacred: they are not to be violated with safety; they are not of quick growth; they are of great importance to the possessor and to society, as models; and, perhaps, in my view of them, they are not hastily or safely to be disturbed. Indeed I am not prepared for such an adventure, were I inclined; but, having neither inclination nor enterprize, I do not like to appear like a drill serjeant, with my cane rapping the knuckles of the private when I become a colonel from the ranks. It is vulgar, and it is the worst and most dangerous of all vulgarities; it is founded always in a bad taste, on bad passions, or some perversion of the judgement misleading into a hateful error; it is the offspring of conscious inferiority; it torments mild dignity into self-assertion; it summons a host to beat down brutality; it inflicts annoyances as if for the good of the service, and under that guise and semblance it parleys with its own oblique passions; it produces a conflict in the aggrieved how to resist this mistaken authority, or to repel with open force, or by embodying opinion against the aggressor, or in some of the many ways in which the soul may be relieved. For my own part, I had so much to endure during my long passage, that now I trust I shall never transgress upon the feelings of the gentleman." And rapidly turning to a gentleman of that order—" My dear F———, do you think that even from your own amiable disposition, and your own peculiar mildness, I should be quite safe were I so to do, were I so to hazard myself even with you?"

He has frequently expressed his surprise, that as yet there has appeared no institution for the education of those destined for the bar; no system or professor to direct the mind of the student from that period at which he leaves the university until he is called to the bar; no regular plan, either of pleading or of theoretic study: and he has lamented it as a *casus omissus*, and as an interval so languid, dark, and disheartening, as to inspire despondency. As a remedy for it, he conceived that it would well reward the time and attention of any barrister and scholar to open an establishment for that purpose, on the plan of the late Doctor Millar of Glasgow; and by lecture and conversation to lead the youthful mind to the shortest and best sources of knowledge. He considered professors of law, such as are established in the universities, to be of no importance; and in adverting to this subject, and by way of illustration, he said the Greek states had a superiority in this particular. He then referred to what Dr. Adam Smith had collected on that subject, and in opening the Wealth of Nations he opened the mines as well of his own as of that able writer.

In 1806 the following eulogy appeared in one of the public prints of Dublin:

"Mr. Curran, since his appointment to the Rolls Court, has afforded general satisfaction; it was for a time the fashion at his outset to appeal from his orders and decrees, and some barristers of high official name have been remarked for their alacrity in advising such appeals at the expense of their clients; however, in the course of those costly experiments, it appeared that Mr. Curran's decisions have been sustained and adopted by the Chancellor in nineteen cases out of twenty; and those who had expected to see the judicial fame of the Master of the Rolls shaken or disparaged, have proved themselves, unwillingly, the best friends and most effectual supporters of the authority of his decisions.

"Moreover, Mr. Curran's paternal kindness to the Irish bar, his uniform politeness, his rigid and uncompromising impartiality and honest earnestness in ascertaining facts, and searching out the truth, have now stamped his character, as not only equal to the expectations of his friends, but as bearing down the sarcasms of his adversaries. Nor does he appear to have entirely laid aside that eloquence which had raised him to the first class of orators, but then he has judiciously exchanged the forensic style for the deliberative; and the zeal of the bold advocate appears mellowed into the pathetic solemnity of the conscientious judge."

This paragraph is much overstrained. The truth is well known, that Mr. Curran's practice was not so much in the courts of equity. This has been partly accounted for already; the minuter details of practice he was not well acquainted with, and at the time of life when he was appointed to that office, the character of the mind had acquired a stiff and unbending rigor, unfit for pursuits which to him were ever uncongenial. Forms were not habitual to his taste, or to the elevation of his mind; its aspirations were loftier. Of forms he once observed that they were bullet moulds: if once, said he, you have them, you may cast on *ad infinitum*. He should have condescended to them, however, and because he did not do so, and because his mind was accustomed to the common, criminal, and constitutional codes, he was not in his proper element in the Rolls. He unwillingly yielded to be placed there; and to the honour of Mr. George Ponsonby, and of Lord Ponsonby, the arrangement was made with Sir Michael Smith to make the vacancy. He never liked the office; he well knew he was not fitted for it:

he sought a wider stage, but that could not be then obtained; and though he did accept it, he filled it with integrity; and this latter quality, and the honesty of an uncorrupted public life, make these the most imperishable of his praises.

To fill this important judicial station with full advantage to the public, and to his own reputation, (if within his power,) he should have descended from those heights to which genius had elevated him. No man should be above the sense of duty when the existence of families depends not only on the ability but the rectitude of principle. I have learned that Mr. Curran did pay great attention to obtain a knowledge of the rules and forms of the court:—he had a great prototype and example in Lord Mansfield, who

> "To bus'ness shap'd the Muses' quill."—

> "How sweet an Ovid was in Murray lost"

may be a very poetical compliment; but what an eminent lawyer, and what a powerful judge, might have been lost, had he given those talents to poetry, or to works of imagination, which were so eminently fitted for jurisprudence!

Mr. Curran's habits of thinking must have made the minuteness of this preparation irksome to him; and probably having no power to regenerate himself, this may have been among his inducements to retire from the Bench at so early a period.

Mr. Curran, some short time before his death, had occasion to consult a physician in London on the general state of his health. He accordingly waited on a gentleman very eminent in that profession; he had no introduction to him, and was perfectly a stranger. The doctor made many enquiries as to the nature of his complaint, and of his constitution, and among other things asked him, had his father ever been afflicted by gout.—Even then, the humour of Mr. Curran did not desert him: he perceived the doctor did not see into the nature of his case, and, hoping little from him, he answered by assuring him, "that his father had left him neither *money* nor *malady;* that the only inheritance he ever got from him was a large stock of excellent advice; and that so careful was he of it, that he never broke bulk, never used any part of it, and that it was very likely to descend to posterity in the very same condition in which it had been left:"—wished the doctor a good morning, and left him *more puzzled about the man than the malady.*

Mr. Curran had for a long time prepared the outline of a Novel; the skeleton of it may yet be found among his papers. Mr. Atkinson, and others of his friends, received great pleasure from its rehearsal by himself. He did meditate many works; but, he gave most of those hours he could devote to the indulgence of himself, in his favourite instrument, the violoncello.—It is hoped that these works, his poems, and his criticism on Milton, may survive*.

A gentleman of one of the southern counties in Ireland, well known for a certain determination of mind, an unaccommodating strength of resolution, was perceived to be very active on some trial in which Mr. Curran was engaged; it was proposed to refer the case to the arbitration of this gentleman, as he was reputed to be an honest man:—on the other side an objection was raised, founded on the known sternness of his character; and it was also remarked, that his *iron* leg was the softest part about him; "Oh, surely," said Mr. Curran, "that must be *irony*."

Mr. Hoare's countenance was grave and solemn, with an expression like one of those statues of the Brutus head: he seldom smiled; and if he smiled, he smiled in such a sort as seemed to have rebuked the spirit that could smile at all. Mr. Curran once observing a beam of joy to enliven his face, remarked, "Whenever I see smiles on Hoare's countenance, I think they are like tin clasps on an oaken coffin."

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* There are many songs and other small poems published under his name.

The printed speech of some young Barrister had been laid before Mr. Curran, and his opinion asked after he had carefully perused it. "Why," said he, "there is much more of flower than figure in it,—more of fancy than design: it is like (as I suspect the mind of the author to be) a tree in full blossom, shake it, and you have them on the ground in a minute, and it would take a season to reproduce them."

A certain member of Parliament, at this moment a distinguished leader of opposition, being lately in the company of Mr. Curran, had heard him copiously and vehemently descant on the numerous grievances under which he represented Ireland to be labouring. This gentleman, become very urgent in his solicitations to get the materials for some good speeches from such a source, rather imprudently requested of Mr. Curran to supply him with a list of these grievances, accompanied by such observations and details as he would wish to make upon them. Mr. Curran suspecting that there was full as much of personal interest as of patriotism in the request, declined gratifying it. Some friend asked him in a few days after, why he did not comply with the earnest desire of the person alluded to. "No," said Mr. Curran, "I have no notion whatever, at my time of life, nor indeed at any, *to turn hodman to any political architect*."

When his imagination once began to take fire, it seems to have had the same influence upon all the faculties of his mind, which Falstaff ascribes to Sherris.—" It ascends me into the brain; it dries me there all the foolish, dull, and crudy vapours which environ it; makes it apprehensive, quick, forgetive, full of nimble, fiery, and delectable shapes; which delivered over to the voice, (the tongue,) which is the birth, become excellent wit."—Henry IV.

I now conclude these anecdotes. Whatever may be the taste of other countries, were nothing more retained of him but those remarkable pieces of his wit and humour, all his conversation, they would be more acceptable to the country of his birth than memoirs of his private or of his public history; possibly they may be so to others. They are indications of mind; and, so far as the study of man is the object of curiosity, they furnish, perhaps, the best and most agreeable means of being acquainted with the nature and operation of Mr. Curran's.

The manner in which Mr. Hardy, the writer of the life of Lord Charlemont, notices Mr. Curran's *debut* in parliament, (the biographer being then a member of the House of Commons, and much esteemed by his friends,) is as follows; " When Lord Northington opened the session of

1783, every thing at first appeared perfectly tranquil; but there was soon an opposition to his administration. It consisted partly of several persons totally unconnected with the court, some young members of very promising talents, who had never before sat in paliament, Sir Laurence Parsons, (now Earl of Ross,) particularly Mr. Arthur Browne, and others. Mr. *Curran* also, who had come into the House of Commons on the general election, joined the opposition (returned for a borough of Lord Longueville's, as before related;) but the persons most hostile to Lord Northington's administration, were some gentlemen who openly professed themselves attached to Mr. Pitt, the Grenvilles, and, in short, the English opposition. In this there was nothing disreputable or improper; some few sessions, however, afterwards, when those same persons supported the court system, as if not only they, but their auditors, had been in the habit of drinking the waters of Lethe, and forgotten all that was said or done, the constant theme of their lamentable declamation was, that all English parliamentary connexion, or acting with any view to English opposition, (no matter how congenial the principles of two parties at this and at the other side of the water might be,) were in the highest degree reprehensible, and injurious to the interests of Ireland: this band, with the gentlemen before mentioned, acted in opposition, but not always in concert; and formed, altogether, a most miscellaneous, and therefore inefficient association, considering the parts and industry of some who composed it. Mr. Flood was generally at their head, and sometimes fancied that he was when in fact he was not; for nothing could be more opposite than his mode of thinking, to the political creed of a few of these gentlemen: several of this opposition, however, acted from principles of sound patriotism. But, after a short campaign of about six weeks, Mr. Flood went to England, and entered the lists, when his reputation, as an orator, suffered a transient eclipse; not, however, that sad and lengthened one which prejudiced, malignant scoffers were so malignantly impatient to proclaim to the friends of Ireland; but those who dared to think for themselves, turned from such scoffers with disdain, and towards Flood with no diminished admiration."

This fixes the date of Mr. Curran's *entrè* into Parliament; and, though he is passingly noticed, it opens some view to the state of parties in Ireland as they then existed. Mr. Hardy was so occupied with his main view, the Biography of the good and gracious Earl of Charlemont, that it was beside his purpose to stop with each distinguished character of that period. They were too numerous; and he passed them with little more attention than was necessary for the object on which he was engaged.

Of the political life of Mr. Curran there may be many matters worthy of recording; but, more engaged in securing the evidences of his genius, both in his speeches and in his sayings, I confess I did at all times conceive his parliamentary efforts to have been much inferior to his forensic, and, perhaps, to his powers in private remarks and conversation. I intended to have published the memoirs of his wit and humour while he was living; and did hope for his revision, and that he would considerably enlarge that, (by far the most agreeable division of this effort.) He confided, and carelessly confided, the whole to me; and, between that inattention he paid, or fastidiously paid, to his own productions, and from the languishing state of his health, I was denied benefits I had earnestly calculated upon; I did expect some aids to that part which treats of his political life: the loss of that I consider as less material; it is so connected with the history of his country, that whatever curiosity may demand, may be easily supplied from the parliamentary debates, and the common sources of information. With the mere details of his private life, I could have no concern while he was yet living; and these Memoirs being in the press when his death was announced, I was happily relieved from the task of doing more than I at first proposed: to preserve some records of a countryman eminently gifted, and eminently unhappy; exalted and depressed; variously represented, and variously treated in opinion. To depart from my first intent would have been indelicate and difficult, perhaps, amid contending opinions, either utterly unbecoming, if not then impracticable. His politics, his judicial integrity, his constancy to his party, and his love of country, I do not more largely enter into, than as proofs of these. To such praises I am firmly of opinion he is justly entitled. But in his various exhibitions in Parliament, it must be confessed, he was inferior to himself. It cannot be doubted that, had he been confined to that department, he would have been qualified for the attainment of the highest reputation. Had his mind, (capable of every acquirement,) directed its forces, and concentrated them; had he sailed without deviation from the course assigned him, he, doubtless, might have been placed by the side of Mr. Pitt, or his co-rival, Mr. Fox, whom he held in great admiration. He might have now slept near them; but his destinies placed him otherwise. His fortunes gave him no election: he was obliged to *paint for the kitchen*, (as Sir Joshua Reynolds observed of himself,) and to give up to his profession what may have been *meant for mankind*, To be greatly eminent as a lawyer and as a senator at the same time, seems not to be perfectly compatible with the powers of any one man, however exalted his mind may be; the great professional character of the former very frequently gives him a hearing, an attention, and a respect, which, were he without these adventitious aids, and standing on the naked merits of his speech, he may not be strictly entitled to. Mr. Curran could not expect a better fate than others similarly circumstanced; and it has fallen to the lot of very few, so to have combined all that could pre-eminently give distinction to both characters, that, at this moment, I am not prepared to point to any persons who were, at the same time, at the head of bar and senate. The names of Lord Mansfield or Lord Erskine do not afford me illustrations of this. Great names certainly, but yet they do not class in this way.

Between the personal and political friends and enemies of Mr. Curran, there will ever arise much contention on the subject of his private life; much may remain to be said; the affections of esteem or of dislike may, no doubt, be variously exercised on this topic. The illustrations from his forensic speeches, I have given as proofs of his extraordinary talents. I have used them for no other purpose; they have no other reference. Little more now remains but to relate whatever else appears to be interesting in his political life.

He was in principle a Whig. His passions, his habits, his friendships, and his education, made him so. He did not obsequiously follow any individual model; nor did he on all occasions pursue the measures of his party. He had an abstract idea of what love of country should inspire; to this he sometimes referred his actions. If there was any one person among those with whom he acted, to whom he would submit his judgement in cases of doubt or of difficulty, so highly did he venerate Mr. Fox, that his authority would alone be very likely to have decided him.

In the year 1795, when Lord Fitzwilliam went to Ireland as Lord Lieutenant, with powers to adopt such conciliatory courses as would best tend to tranquillize that country, he, among others, called to his councils Mr. Grattan. They, in the early stage of the French war, had professed themselves hostile to its continuance on the part of Great Britain. Lord Fitzwilliam, before he undertook the government of Ireland, had expressed himself in the House of Lords to be friendly to that measure, and had accordingly given it his support. Mr. Grattan being the minister of Lord Fitzwilliam's administration, moved in the Irish House of Commons an address to his Excellency, proposing to pledge Parliament to a firm and determined support of the war against France, and to prosecute it with vigour. Mr. Curran opposed the address, although at that time he was in expectation of being appointed to the office of Solicitor-General. He was all through an enemy to the war.

His reputation for patriotism does not stand on the narrow ground of being merely consistent to his party: such praise as that can confer he is justly entitled to: in this, however, he appears to have been guided on some occasions by his own judgement, and by different views from those adopted by the men with whom he was connected. He was not so shallow an observer, or such a bigot in politics, as not to have known, that in *all* the measures, a party can no more be uniformly wise or just, than that *all* those whom they oppose can be uniformly the contrary. He, therefore, was not a mere instrument to be put in motion at the will of a leader; and, as he came into three successive parliaments at his own expense, he considered himself entitled to the privilege of acting independently of party, when he thought fit so to do. On such occasions he retained for himself the liberty of exercising his own discretion. In the instance here related, when he was approaching his fiftieth year, standing on the tiptoe of expectation; when much of his life, and most of his hope, had been exhausted; when he must have noticed that Whig administrations had not been, of late years, very lasting; when he, who never had obtained any professional advancement to office or otherwise, through his politics—when he knew that he must have diminished his pretensions, and have endangered his prospects by opposing the address; yet he committed all to hazard; and, acting on his own notions of right, has left this one, (if there were not more,) demonstration of the independence of his mind, and of the rectitude of his principles. This trait of his character, connected with the anecdote related of him in his transaction with Lord Longueville, his refusing the office of Solicitor-General from Lord Kilwarden, can leave no doubt that he must on all these occasions have excluded the consideration of personal aggrandisement, in gratification of the higher motives of acting in conformity with those notions which had obtained such an ascendancy over him, that they composed part of himself, and became inseparable from him.

If Mr. Curran's speeches in Parliament do not abound in the profundity of statesman-like knowledge, either financial or commercial; if they do not hold the same rank in public opinion which those delivered at the bar maintain, their pungency, personality, and caustic wit and ridicule, must have been powerful reinforcements to his party; and though such are not to be eulogized, perhaps may have been below his pretensions, yet, by these means, he filled up in the senate a grand compartment, which could not have been occupied by any other of his colleagues. Surrounded as he was by satellites of different degrees of heat and of light, the course he took was marked by its fire; and he moved through regions peculiarly his own. If the state of society, or of his audience, drew out his acerbity, or if the nature of the measures he had to oppose make any justification, it must be found in a mind wounded and goaded into an exasperation which, in the well regulated assembly of a British Parliament, would not be patiently endured.

In his speech, delivered in the House of Commons on Catholic Emancipation, on the 17th of October, 1796, he attacked Dr. Duigenan with his accustomed wit and ridicule. As this is put forward among his Parliamentary speeches, it will afford a just conception of his style of senatorial eloquence.

"Mr. Grattan moved the following resolution:—'That the admissibility of persons professing the Roman Catholic religion to seats in parliament is consistent with the safety of the crown, and the connexion of Ireland with Great Britain.'

"Seconded by Mr. G. Ponsonby.

" Mr. G. Ogle voted for the order of the day.

" Mr. Curran began by declaring, that he had no words to express the indignation he felt at the despicable attempt to skulk from the discussion of so important and so necessary a question, by the affectation of an appeal to our secrecy and our discretion; the ludicrous, the ridiculous secrecy of a public assembly; the nonsense of pretending to conceal from the world what they know as well, or better, than ourselves; the rare discretion of an Irish parliament hiding from the executive directory of the French republic the operations of their own armies; concealing from them their victories in Italy, or their humiliation of Great Britain; concealing from them the various coquetry of her negociations, and her now avowed solicitations of a peace. As ridiculous and as empty was the senseless parade of affecting to keep our own deliberations a secret. Rely upon it, Sir, said he, if our enemies condescend to feel any curiosity as to our discussion, you might as well propose to conceal from them the course of the Danube, or the course of the Rhine, as the course of a debate in this assembly, as winding, perhaps, and perhaps as muddy as either.

" Mr. Curran went into a detail of the property laws as they affected the Catholics of Ireland. He described them as destructive of arts, of industry, of private morals and public order, as extirpating even the Christian religion among them, and reducing them to the condition of savages and rebels, disgraceful to humanity, and formidable to the state. Having traced the progress and effects of those laws from the revolution to 1779; let me now ask you, said he, how have those laws affected the Protestant subject and the Protestant constitution? In that interval were they free? did they possess that liberty which they denied to their brethren?

No, Sir, where there are inhabitants, but no people, there can be no freedom; unless there be a spirit, and what may be called a pull in the people, a free government cannot be kept steady or fixed in its seat. You had indeed a government, but it was planted in civil dissension, and watered in civil blood; and whilst the virtuous luxuriance of its branches aspired to heaven, its infernal roots shot downward to their congenial regions, and were intertwined in hell. Your ancestors thought themselves the oppressors of their fellow-subjects, but they were only their jailors; and the justice of Providence would have been frustrated, if their own slavery had not been the punishment of their vice and their folly.

"He then proceeded to examine the objections to a general incorporation of the Catholics. On general principles no man could justify the deprivation of civil rights on any ground but that of forfeiture for some offence. The Papist of the last century might forfeit his property for ever, for that was his own; but he could not forfeit the rights and capacities of his unborn posterity. And let me observe, said he, that even those laws against the offender himself were enacted while injuries were recent, and while men were not unnaturally alarmed by the consideration of a French monarchy, a pretender, and a pope; things that we now read of, but can see no more. But are they disaffected to liberty? On what ground can such an imputation be supported? Do you see any instance of any man's religious theory governing his civil or political conduct? Is Popery an enemy to freedom? Look to France, and be answered. Is Protestantism necessarily its friend? You are Protestants, look to yourselves, and be refuted. But look further; do you find even the religious sentiments of sectaries marked by the supposed characteristics of their sects? Do you find that a Protestant Briton can be a bigot with only two sacraments, and a Catholic Frenchman a Deist admitting seven? But you affect to think your property in danger by admitting them into the state. That has been already refuted, but you have yourselves refuted your own objection. Seventeen years ago you expressed the same fear, yet you made the experiment; you opened the door to landed property, and the fact has shewn the fear to be without foundation.

"But another curious topic has been stated again; the Protestant ascendancy is in danger. What do you mean by that word? Do you mean the right, and property, and dignities of the church? If you do, you must feel they are safe. They are secured by the law, by the coronation oath, by a Protestant parliament, a Protestant king, a Protestant confederated nation. Do you mean the free and protected exercise of the Protestant religion? You know it has the same security to support it. Or do you mean the just and honourable support of the numerous and meritorious clergy of our own country, who really discharge the labours and duties of the ministry? As to that, let me say, that if we felt on that subject as we ought, we should not have so many men of talents and virtues struggling under the difficulties of their scanty pittance, and feeling the melancholy conviction that no virtues or talents can give them any hope of advancement. If you really mean the preservation of every right and every honour that can dignify a Christian priest, and give authority to his function, I will protect them as zealously as you. I will ever respect and revere the man who employs himself in diffusing light, hope, and consolation. But if you mean by ascendancy the power of persecution, I detest and abhor it. If you mean the ascendancy of an English school over an Irish university, I cannot look upon it without aversion. An ascendancy of that form raises to my mind a little greasy emblem of stall-fed theology, imported from some foreign land, with the graces of a lady's maid, the dignity of a side-table, the temperance of a larder, its sobriety the dregs of a patron's bottle, and its wisdom the dregs of a patron's understanding, brought hither to devour, to degrade, and to defame. Is it to such a thing you would have it thought that you affixed the idea of the Protestant ascendancy? But it is said, admit them by degrees, and do not run the risk of too precipitate an incorporation. I conceive both the argument and the fact unfounded. In a mixed government, like ours, an increase of the democratic power can scarcely ever be dangerous. Not one of the three powers of our constitution acts singly in the line of its natural direction; each is necessarily tempered and diverted by the action of the other two: and hence it is, that though the power of the crown has, perhaps, far transcended the degree to which theory might confine it, the liberty of the British constitution may not be in much danger. An increase of power to any of the three acts finally upon the state with a very diminished influence, and therefore great indeed must be that increase in any one of them which can endanger the practical balance of the constitution. Still, however, I contend not against the caution of a gradual admission. But let me ask you, can you admit them any otherwise than gradually? The striking and melancholy symptom of the public disease is, that if it recovers at all it can be only through a feeble and lingering convalescence. Yet even this gradual admission your Catholic brethren do not ask, save under every pledge and every restriction which your justice and wisdom can recommend to your adoption.'

"He called on the house to consider the necessity of acting with a social and conciliatory mind, remarking, that contrary conduct may perhaps protract the unhappy depression of our country, but a partial liberty cannot long subsist. A disunited people cannot long subsist. With infinite regret must any man look forward to the alienation of three millions of our people, and to a degree of subserviency and corruption in the fourth: I am sorry, said he, to think it is so very easy to conceive, that in case of such an event the inevitable consequence would be, AN UNION WITH GREAT BRITAIN. And if any one desires to know what that would be, I will tell him; IT WOULD BE THE EMIGRATION OF EVERY MAN OF CONSEQUENCE FROM IRELAND; IT WOULD BE THE PARTICIPATION OF BRITISH TAXES WITHOUT BRITISH TRADE; IT WOULD BE THE EXTINCTION OF THE IRISH NAME AS A PEOPLE. WE SHOULD BECOME A WRETCHED COLONY, PERHAPS LEASED OUT TO A COMPANY OF JEWS, AS WAS FORMERLY IN CONTEMPLATION, AND GOVERNED BY A FEW TAX-GATHERERS AND EXCISEMEN, UNLESS POSSIBLY YOU MAY ADD FIFTEEN OR TWENTY COUPLE OF IRISH MEMBERS, WHO MIGHT BE FOUND EVERY SESSION SLEEPING IN THEIR COLLARS UNDER THE MANGER OF THE BRITISH MINISTER.

"Mr. Curran then entered largely into the state of the empire and of its allies; of the disposition of our enemies towards Great Britain; of the nature of their political principles; and, of the rapid dissemination of those principles. He declared that it was difficult to tell whether the dissemination of those principles was likely to be more encouraged by the *continuance of the war, or by the establishment of a peace;* and if the war was, as has been repeatedly insisted on, a war on our part for the preservation of social order and of limited monarchy, he strongly urged the immediate necessity of making those objects the common interest and the common cause of every man in the nation. He reprobated the idea of any disloyalty in the Catholics, an idea which, he said, was sometimes more than intimated, and sometimes at vehemently disclaimed by the enemies of Catholic Emancipation; but, he said, the Catholics were men, and were of course sensible to the impression of kindness, and injury, and of insult; that they knew their rights, and felt their wrongs, and that nothing but the grossest ignorance, or the meanest hypocrisy, could represent them as cringing with a slavish fondness to those who oppressed and insulted them. He sought, he said, to remove their oppressions, in order to make the interests of the whole nation one and the same: and to that great object, the resolution, moved by his right honourable friend, manifestly tended; and he lamented exceedingly, that so indecent and so disingenuous a way of evading that motion had been resorted to, as passing to the order of the day, a conduct that, however speciously the gentlemen who had adopted it might endeavour to excuse, he declared, could be regarded by the Catholics, and by the public, no otherwise than as an expression of direct hostility to the Catholic claims. He animadverted, with much severity, upon an observation from the other side of the house, that the Catholics were already in possession of political liberty, and were only seeking for political power. He asked, what was it then that we were so anxiously withholding, and so greedily monopolizing; and declared, that the answer which had been given to that observation, by a learned and honourable friend near him (Mr. Wm. Smith) was that of a true patriot, and of a sound constitutional lawyer; namely, that civil liberty was a shadow, without a sufficient portion of political power to protect it.

"Having replied to the arguments of several members that had preceded him in the debate, Mr. Curran came to the speech that had been delivered by Dr. Duigenan, and entertained the house, for about half an hour, with one of the most lively sallies of wit and humour that we remember to have heard. He said, that the learned doctor had made himself a very prominent figure in the debate! Furious indeed had been his anger, and manifold his attack; what argument, or what man, or what thing, had he not abused? Half choaked by his rage in refuting those who had spoke, he had relieved himself by attacking those who had not spoke; he had abused the Catholics, he had abused their ancestors, he had abused the merchants of Ireland, he had abused Mr. Burke, he had abused those who voted for the order of the day. I do not know, said Mr. Curran, but I ought to be obliged to the learned doctor, for honouring me with a place in the invective; he has called me the bottle-holder of my right honourable friend; sure I am, said he, that if I had been the bottle-holder of both, the learned doctor would have less reason to complain of me than my right honourable friend; for him I should have left perfectly sober, whilst it would very clearly appear, that, with respect to the learned doctor, the bottle had not only been managed fairly, but generously; and, that if, in furnishing him with liquor, I had not furnished him with argument, I had, at least, furnished him with a good excuse for wanting it; with the best excuse for that confusion of history, and divinity, and civil law, and canon law, that rollocking mixture of politics, and theology, and antiquity, with which he has overwhelmed the debate, for the havoc and carnage he has made of the population of the last age, and the fury with which he seemed determined to exterminate, and even to devour the population of this; and which urged him, after tearing and gnawing the characters of the Catholics, to spend the last efforts of his rage with the most unrelenting ferocity, in actually gnawing their names, [alluding to Dr. Duigenan's pronunciation of the name of Mr. Keogh, and which, Mr. Curran said, was a kind of pronuntiatory defamation.] In truth, Sir, said he, I felt some surprise, and some regret, when I heard him describe the sceptre of lath and the tiara of straw, and mimic his bedlamite emperor and pope with such refined and happy gesticulation, that he could be prevailed on to quit so congenial a company. I should not, however, said he, be disposed to hasten his return to them, or to precipitate the access of his fit, if by a most unlucky felicity of indiscretion, he had not dropped some doctrines which the silent approbation of the minister seemed to have adopted. Mr. Curran said, he did not mean amongst these doctrines to place the learned doctor's opinions touching the revolution, nor his wise and valorous plan, in case of an invasion, of arming the beadles and the sextons, and putting himself in wind for an attack upon the French, by a massacre of the Papists: the doctrine he meant was, that Catholic franchise was inconsistent with British connexion. Strong, indeed, said he, must the minister be in so wild and desperate a prejudice, if he can venture, in the fallen state of the empire, under the disasters of the war, and with an enemy at the gate, if he can dare to state to the great body of the Irish nation, that their slavery is the condition of their connexion with England, that she is more afraid of yielding to Irish liberty than of losing Irish connexion; and the denunciation, he said, was not yet upon record, it might yet be left with the learned doctor, who, he hoped, had embraced it only to make it odious, had hugged it in his arms with the generous purpose of plunging with it into the deep, and exposing it to merited derision, even at the hazard of the character of his own sanity. It was yet in the power of the minister to decide, whether a blasphemy of this kind should pass for the mere ravings of frenzy, or for the solemn and mischievous lunacy of a minister: he called therefore again, to rouse that minister from his trance, and in the hearing of the two countries, to put that question to him, which must be heard by a third, whether at no period, upon no event, at no extremity, we were to hope for any connexion with Britain, except that of the master and the slave, and this even without the assertion of any fact that could support such a proscription? It was necessary, he found, to state the terms and the nature of the connexion; it had been grossly misrepresented; it was a great federal contract between perfectly equal nations, pledging themselves to equal fate, upon the terms of equal liberty, upon perfectly equal liberty. The motive to that contract was the mutual benefit to each; the object of it, their mutual and common benefit; the condition of the compact was, the honest and fair performance of it, and from that only arose the obligation of it. If England shewed a decided purpose of invading our liberty, the compact by such an act of foulness and perfidy was broken, and the connexion utterly at an end: but, he said, the resolution moved for by his right honourable friend to the test of this connexion, to invade our liberty, was a dissolution of it. But what is liberty as known to our constitution? It is a portion of political power necessary to its conservation; as, for instance, the liberty of the commons of those kingdoms is that right, accompanied with a portion of political power to preserve it against the crown and against the aristocracy. It is by invading the power that the right is attacked in any of its constituent parts; hence it is, that if the crown shews a deliberate design of so destroying it, it is an abdication; and let it be remembered, that by our compact we have given up no constitutional right. He said, therefore, that he was warranted, as a constitutional lawyer, in stating, that if the crown or its ministers, by force or by fraud, destroyed that fair representation of the people by which alone they could be protected in their liberty, it was a direct breach of the contact of connexion; and he could not scruple to say, that if a house of commons could be so debauched as to deny the right stated in the resolution, it was out of their own mouths, conclusive evidence of the fact. He insisted that the claim of the Catholics to that right was directly within the spirit of the compact: and what have been the arguments advanced against the claim? One was an argument, which, if founded in fact, would have some weight; it was, that the Catholics did not make the claim at all. Another argument was used, which he thought had as little foundation in fact, and was very easy to be reconciled to the other; it was, that the Catholics made their claim with insolence, and attempted to carry their object by intimidation. Let gentlemen take this fact, if they please, in opposition to their own denial of it. The Catholics then do make the demand; is their demand just? Is it just that they should be free? Is it just that they should have franchise? The justice is expressly admitted; why not given then? The answer is, they demand it with insolence. Suppose that assertion, false as it is in fact, to be true, is it any argument with a public assembly, that any incivility of demand can cover the injustice of refusal? How low must that assembly be fallen, which can suggest as an apology for the refusal of an incontestible right, the answer which a bankrupt buck might give to the demand of his tailor; he will not pay the bill, because, "the rascal had dared to threaten his honour." As another argument against their claims, their principles had been maligned; the experience of a century was the refutation of the aspersion. The articles of their faith had been opposed by the learned doctor to the validity of their claims. Can their religion, said he, be an objection, where a total absence of all religion, where atheism itself is none? The learned doctor, no doubt, thought he was praising the mercy with which they had been governed, when he dilated upon their poverty; but can poverty be an objection in an assembly whose humble and Christian condescension shut not its doors even against the common beggar? He had traduced some of them by name;

"Mr. Byrne and Mr. Keogh, and four or five ruffians from the Liberty;" but, said Mr. Curran, this is something better than frenzy; this is something better than the want of mere feeling and decorum; there could not, perhaps, be a better way of evincing a further and more important want of the Irish nation, the want of a reformed representation of the people in parliament. For, what can impress the necessity of it more strongly upon the justice, upon the humanity, the indignation, and the shame, of an assembly of Irish gentlemen, than to find the people so stripped of all share in the representation, as that the most respectable class of our fellow-citizens, men who had acquired wealth upon the noblest principle, the practice of commercial industry and integrity, could be made the butts of such idle and unavailing, such shameful abuse, without the possibility of having an opportunity to vindicate themselves; when men of that class can be exposed to the degradation of unanswered calumny, or the more bitter degradation of eleemosynary defence? Mr. Curran touched upon a variety of other topics, and concluded with the most forcible appeal to the minister, to the house, and to the country, upon the state of public affairs at home and abroad. He insisted that the measure was not, as it had been stated to be, a measure of mere internal policy; it was a measure that involved the question of right and wrong, of just and unjust: but it was more, it was a measure of the most absolute necessity, which could not be denied, and which could not safely be delayed. He could not, he said, foresee future events; he could not be appalled by the future, for he could not see it; but the present he could see, and he could not but see that it was big with danger; it might be the crisis of political life, or political extinction; it was a time fairly to state to the country, whether they had any thing, and what to fight for; whether they are to struggle for a connexion of tyranny or of privilege; whether the administration of England will let us condescend to forgive the insolence of her happier days; or whether, as the beams of her prosperity have wasted and consumed us, so even the frost of her adversity shall perform the deleterious effects of fire, and burn upon our privileges and our hopes for ever."

The great questions which were agitated in the earlier and subsequent periods of Mr. Curran's parliamentary career, were Mr. Orde's (afterwards Lord Bolton,) famous commercial propositions, which, from the opposition they met, were finally withdrawn; on this occasion Mr. Curran distinguished himself by successful attacks on Mr. Orde and his measure; his speech on that subject is retained, but it is not remarkable for any thing more than some pungent personalities, much fire and determination. Mr. Orde was secretary to the Duke of Bedford, who succeeded Lord Northington in 1785. On the bill for emancipating the Catholics, he exerted every faculty of his mind; strenuous and immutably attached to that cause, he was opposed to Dr. Duigenan. On the great question of parliamentary reform, and on appointing a regent, he was among those most distinguished; in short, there was no great measure discussed during the many years he sat in parliament, in which he did not take a conspicuous part. The great names with which his must be associated, were Mr. Grattan, Mr. Flood, Mr. Geo. Ponsonby, Mr. Forbes, Mr. Richard Sheridan, the first cousin of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Mr. (now Judge) Fletcher, Mr. Charles O'Neil, Arthur Browne, and a long list of other eminent persons; among these he held a considerable rank, and was much in the confidence of his party. During the administration of the Duke of Portland, Mr. Curran obtained a silk gown, the only honour ever conferred on him, till he was appointed Master of the Rolls, and this was supposed to be conferred at the request of Mr. Yelverton.

On the 14th of April, 1782, the Duke of Portland arrived in Dublin, as Viceroy, Lord Carlisle having sent in his resignation; this afforded Mr. Curran an opportunity of distinguishing himself under a Whig administration; the Marquis of Rockingham was then at the head of it in England; Mr. Yelverton was then attorney general, and he held out to Mr. Curran every encouragement to go into parliament.

Mr. Grattan and Mr. George Ponsonby were the great leaders of opposition, and in 1787 Mr. Curran joined their standard *. "In the year 1781 (a tempestuous period) the delegates from that celebrated convention which originated from the southern battalion of the first Ulster regiment, (commanded by the Earl of Charlemont,) the

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* See Hardy's History of Lord Charlemont.

officers and delegates of that battalion assembled in December of that year; they invited every volunteer association through the province of Ulster, to assert their rights, to send delegates to deliberate on the alarming situation of public affairs, and they fixed on the 15th of February, 1782, for such assembly; the delegates were to meet at Dungannon. Somewhat after this eventful transaction, the ministry in England gave way, and a Whig Ministry succeeded it: it was some time after this period, when the agitation of the country had not yet subsided, that Mr. Curran came into parliament, and ranged himself beside the opposition."

To give a detail of the great events from that period down to the Union, would be beyond the professed object of this Memoir; it would become a parliamentary history, rather than a relation of incidents connected with the main view. A deviation into the transactions or the characters of the distinguished men who flourished during these times, would diminish the interest (if any has been kept alive) of this attempt to give a picture of the mind of the great original, I with conscious inability presume to draw. In the periodical publications, in the parliamentary debates, in the fugitive pieces, and the pamphlets of those times, may be found every thing that can gratify curiosity on this subject. So far as Mr. Curran's name is connected with all the great events which took place in his own country, (and he will be found to have taken a large share in them,) his public spirit stands as a record which will live while such can command esteem and regard.

When Mr. Curran was appointed to the Rolls, it is said he reluctantly accepted that office; and that the arrangement for Sir Michael Smith's resignation on a pension of three thousand pounds a-year was made without consulting Mr. Curran. The original engagement was, that he was to have obtained the next best law office to Mr. George Ponsonby, whenever the party should come into power. The Rolls he did not hold as of that weight or importance. His habits and his wishes, and his qualifications, and practice, he conceived better fitted him for the office of Attorney-General: and, it is said, that his ultimate views were to be appointed Chief Justice of the King's Bench. Sir Michael Smith stipulated that those under him should be continued: and when Mr. Curran's appointment was announced to him, he was not apprised of the minor arrangements. His friends Lord Ponsonby, and Mr. George Ponsonby, who then became Chancellor of Ireland, conceived that they did all that was practicable; all that was possible; and, having obtained the resignation, they conceived they had accomplished all that, in the sincerity and openness of friendship, they could achieve. Of Lord Ponsonby, Mr. Curran always spoke in terms of the greatest esteem; and no imputation was ever cast on either. The truth seems to be, that, owing to the want of explanation, as to the power of nominating to the under department, some difference arose, which ended in breaking up a friendship that had so long subsisted, both privately and politically, between Mr. George Ponsonby and Mr. Curran. Mr. Curran accepted the office; and did nominate an officer of his own choice in the place of Mr. Ridgeway; thus insisting on his right so to do. Mr. Ponsonby, eternally to his honour, granted an annuity on his estate to Mr. Ridgeway to the full amount of the office. There was published a statement of this transaction by Mr. Curran; and I have heard that the whole subject was offered to be referred to Lord Moira and Mr. Grattan. Mr. Ponsonby seems to have taken no farther concern about it after he had granted the annuity. On this transaction, so variously related, I presume not to decide: possibly the proofs are inscrutable at this moment; and may be buried in the tombs of those who left a lesson of moderation to their survivors by the generosity of mutual forgiveness.

Mr. Curran, after he sat on the Rolls Bench, still continued to desire a seat in the Imperial Parliament. He had at one time an expectation of being returned for a borough of Lord Camelford. Some general report prevailed that he meant to offer himself for Westminster; but this, I should suppose, had no foundation in truth. He, at the last election for Newry, offered himself as a candidate for its representation; and had a very powerful support on that occasion: one of his speeches then delivered abounds in all the fire which animated his earliest efforts: he, however, was unsuccessful; and he seems ever after to have abandoned any hope of obtaining a seat in Parliament. He never was returned to the British House of Commons: and often expressed, as his private opinion, his doubts whether he was properly fitted for it *.

The following will furnish a specimen of Mr. Curran's style of deliberative and judicial eloquence, as delivered in the Court of Rolls, in the case of Merry *v.* Rt. Rev. Doctor John Power, Roman Catholic Bishop of Waterford.—The facts are as follow:

"In 1804, Mary Power made her will, bequeathing a considerable part of her property to the Rev. John Power, and others, in trust for charitable purposes. Her brother Joseph, then a merchant in Spain, was her next of kin, and residuary legatee: he died intestate, and his son, the now plaintiff, came over and took out administration to his deceased father, and brought a suit in the Spiritual Court, to set aside the will, as unduly obtained, and as disposing of a large property to Papists, and for superstitious uses. In that court the plaintiff applied for an administrator, *pendente lite*, and was refused. The present bill was filed, praying that the effects might be brought into court. This bill was filed only a few weeks; and now, before the defendant had answered, a motion was made by Doctor Vavasour, for a receiver; and that Doctor Power, the acting executor, should be ordered forthwith to bring the effects into court; he relied on the affidavit of his client, the plaintiff, charging that the will was obtained by fraud by the defendant Power, and that at best it could not be sustained, as being a trust altogether for *Popish uses*. The motion was opposed by Mr. Prendergast, who strongly argued against the imputations thrown out upon the conduct of Doctor Power, by the name of this '*one John Power, a Popish priest*.' He insisted that under the whole circumstances there was no colour for impeaching the transaction; that the bequests were most praise-worthy; that there had already been a decree of this court obtained by the trustees of charitable donations, affirming the legality of the trusts, and that it would be unprecedented for a court to interfere in this way, and before an answer came in, or any delay or resistance, on the part of the defendant, to put in his answer. Other gentlemen, on both sides, argued very zealously for their clients.

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* See p. 255.

"His Honour said, that if the question had been brought forward upon the mere rule of the court, he should not have thought it necessary to give many reasons for the order he intended to make; but 'pressed so strongly as it has been, both by the arguments themselves, and perhaps more so by the style and manner of putting them, as well as the supposed policy which has been called in to aid them;

"'I think,' said his Honour, 'I ought to state the grounds upon which I mean to act in my decision. First, then, it is urged, that this is the case of an insolvent and wasting executor, having fraudulently obtained the will. As to insolvency—to be an executor it is not necessary to be rich; integrity and discretion are the essential qualities of an executor. If the testator thinks he has found these in an executor of humble means, this court has no power to control him; he may bestow his property as a gift to whom he pleases. It would be strange if he could not confide it as a trust to whom he chooses; I know of no necessary connexion between wealth and honesty;—I fear that integrity is not always found to be the parent or offspring of riches. To interfere, therefore, as is now sought, with this executor, would be little short of removing the will. But it is said this will has been obtained by fraud, practised by this '*one John Power*.' No doubt this court has acted, where strong ground of suspicion of fraud, and danger of the property being made away with, have appeared; but, do these grounds now appear to this court?'

"Here his Honour recapitulated the facts sworn to, and said:

"I see no semblance of fact to sustain such a charge. Who does this '*one John Power, a Popish priest*,' turn out to be?—I find he is a Catholic clergyman—a doctor in divinity, and the titular bishop in the diocese of Waterford. And yet I am now pressed to believe that this gentleman has obtained this will by fraud. Every fact now appearing repels the charge; I cannot but say that the personal character of the person accused, repels it still more strongly. Can I be brought, on grounds like those now before me, to believe, that a man, having the education of a scholar, the habits of a religious life, and vested with so high a character in the ministry of the Gospel, could be capable of so detestable a profanation as is flung upon him?—Can I forget that he is a Christian bishop, clothed not in the mere authority of a sect, but clothed in the indelible character of the Episcopal order—suffering no diminution from his supposed heterodoxy, nor drawing any increase or confirmation from the merits of his conformity, should he think proper to renounce what we call the errors of faith?—Can I bring my mind on slight, or rather on no grounds, to believe, that he could so trample under his feet all the impressions of that education, of those habits, and of that high rank in the sacred ministry of the Gospel which he holds, as to sink to the odious impiety imputed to him?—Can I bring myself to believe such a man, at the dying bed of his fellow-creature, would be capable with one hand of presenting the cross before her lifted eye, and with the other, of basely thieving from her those miserable dregs of this world, of which his perfidious tongue was employed in teaching her a Christian's estimate?—I do not believe it; on the contrary, I am (as far as it belongs to me in this interlocutory way, to judge of the fact) as perfectly convinced that the conduct of Doctor Power was what it ought to be, as I am that the testatrix is dead.

" 'But,' said his Honour, ' I am called on to interfere, *it being a foolish bequest to superstitious, and those Popish uses?* I have looked into those bequests—I find the object of them is to provide shelter and comfortable support for poor helpless females; and clothes, and food, and instruction for poor orphan children. Would to God I could see more frequent instances of such bequests! Beautiful in the sight of God must it be—beautiful in the sight of man ought it to be, to see the dying Christian so employed—to see the last moments of human life so spent in acts of gratuitous benevolence, or even of interested expiation.—How can we behold such acts, without regarding them as forming a claim to, as springing from a consciousness of immortality? In all ages the hour of death has been considered as an interval of more than ordinary illumination; as if some rays from the light of the approaching world had found their way to the darkness of the parting spirit, and revealed to it an existence that could not terminate in the grave, but was to commence in death.

"But these uses are condemned, as being not only superstitious but Popish uses. As to that, I must say that I feel no disposition to give any assistance even to the orthodox rapine of the living, in defeating even the heterodox charity of the dead. I am aware that this objection means somewhat more than directly meets the ear, if it means any thing. The objects of these bequests, it seems, are Catholics, or, as they have been called, *Papists*; and the insinuation clearly is, that the religion of the objects of this woman's bounty, calls upon me to exercise some peculiar rigour of interference to abridge or defeat her intentions. Upon this point I wish to be distinctly understood; I do not conceive this to be the spirit of our existing law; nor, of course, the duty of this court to act upon that principle in the way contended for. In times, thank God, now past, the laws would have warranted such doctrines. *Those laws owed their existence to unfortunate combinations of circumstances that were thought to render them necessary. But if we look back with sorrow to their enactment, let us look forward with kindness and gratitude to their repeal. Produced by national calamity, they were brought by national benevolence, as well as by national contrition, to the altar of public justice and concord, and there offered as a sacrifice to atone, to heal, to conciliate, to restore social confidence, and to give us that hope of pros-*

perity and safety, which no people ever had, or deserved, or dared to have, except where it is founded on the community of interests, a perfectly even and equal participation of just rights, and a consequent contribution of all the strength—of all the parts so equally interested in the defence of the whole.

"I know they have been supposed to originate in religious bigotry—that is, religious zeal carried to excess—I never thought so. The real spirit of our holy religion is too incorruptibly pure and beneficent to be depraved into any such excess. Analyse the bigot's object, and we see he takes nothing from religion but a flimsy pretext in the profanation of its name; he professes the correction of error and the propagation of truth. But when he has gained the victory, what are the terms he makes for himself? Power and profit. What terms does he make for religion? Profession and conformity. What is that profession? The mere utterance of the lips; the utterance of sounds, that after a pulsation or two upon the air, are just as visible and lasting as they are audible. What is the conformity? Is it the practice of any social virtue or Christian duty? Is it the forgiveness of injuries, or the payment of debts, or the practice of charity? No such things. It is the performance of some bodily gesture or attitude. It is going to some place of worship. It is to stand or to kneel, or to bow to the poor-box, but it is not a conformity that has any thing to do with the judgement, or the heart, or the conduct. All these things bigotry meddles not with, but leaves them to religion herself to perform. Bigotry only adds one more, and that a very odious one, to the number of those human stains which it is the business of true religion not to burn out with the bigot's fire, but to expunge and wash away by the Christian's tears:—such, invariably, in all the countries and ages, have been the motives to the bigot's conflicts, and such the use of his victories: not the propagation of any opinion, but the engrossment of power and plunder—of homage and tribute. Such, I much fear, was the real origin of our Popery laws. But power and privilege must necessarily be confined to very few. In hostile armies you find them pretty equal, the victors and the vanquished, in the numbers of their hospitals and in the numbers of their dead; so it is with nations, the great mass is despoiled and degraded, but the spoil itself is confined to few indeed. The result finally can be nothing but the disease of dropsy and decrepitude. In Ireland this was peculiarly the case. Religion was dishonoured, man was degraded, and social affection was almost extinguished. A *few, a very few* still profited by this abasement of humanity. But let it be remembered, with a just feeling of grateful respect to their patriotic and disinterested virtue, and it is for this purpose that I have alluded as I have done, that *that* few composed the whole power of the legislature which concurred in the repeal of that system, and left remaining of it, not an edifice to be demolished, but a mere heap of rubbish, unsightly, perhaps pernicious—to be carted away.

"If the repeal of those laws had been a mere abjuration of intolerance, I should have given it little credit. The growing knowledge of the world, particularly of the sister nation, had disclosed and unmasked intolerance, had put it to shame, and consequently to flight!—*But though public opinion may proscribe intolerance, it cannot take away powers or privileges established by law.* Those powers of exclusion and monopoly could be given up only by the generous relinquishment of those who possessed them. And nobly were they so relinquished by those repealing statutes. Those lovers of their country saw the public necessity of the sacrifice, and most disinterestedly did they make it. If too, they have been singular in this virtue, they have been as singularly fortunate in their reward. In general, the legislator, though he sows the seed of public good, is himself numbered with the dead before the harvest can be gathered. With us it has not been so—with us the public benefactors, many of them at least, have lived to see the blessing of Heaven upon their virtue, in an uniformly accelerating progress of industry and comfort, and liberality, and social affection, and common interest, such as I do not believe that any age or nation has ever witnessed.

"Such I do know was the view, and such the hope, with which that legislature, *now no more!* proceeded so far as they went, in the repeal of those laws so repealed. And well do I know, how warmly it is now remembered by every thinking Catholic, that not a single voice for those repeals was or could be given, except by a Protestant legislator. *With infinite pleasure do I also know and feel, that the same sense of justice and good will which then produced the repeal of those laws, is continuing to act, and with increasing energy, upon those persons in both countries, whose worth and whose wisdom are likely to explode whatever principle is dictated by bigotry and folly, and to give currency and action to whatever principle is wise and salutary. Such, also, I know to be the feelings of every court in this hall. It is from this enlarged and humanized spirit of legislation that courts of justice ought to take their principles of expounding the law.*

"At another time I should probably have deemed it right to preserve a more respectful distance from some subjects which I have presumed (but certainly with the best intentions, and I hope, no unbecoming freedom,) to approach. But I see the interest the question has excited, and I think it right to let no person carry away with him any mistake, as to the grounds of my decision, *or suppose that it is either the duty or the disposition of our courts to make any harsh or jealous distinctions in their judgement, founded on any differences of religious sects or tenets.* I think, therefore, the motion ought to be refused; and I think myself bound to mark still more strongly my sense of its impropriety, by refusing it with full costs.".

While Mr. Curran was Master of the Rolls, he was invited by the independent interest of the town of Newry to offer himself as a candidate to represent it. His speech on that occasion not being among any collection of those published under his name, is here given, and demonstrates that, even so late in life, the fire of his genius was by no means diminished.

" On the morning of the sixth day of the poll, October 17, 1812, Mr Curran rose and addressed the court in substance as follows: He said, he had been induced by some of the most respectable electors of the borough to offer himself a candidate. As to himself, he could have no wish to add to the weight of his public duties; and as to serving the country essentially, he thought very moderately indeed of his own powers: but under circumstances like the present, under such rulers, and in such a state of popular representation, or rather unrepresentation, he was perfectly convinced, that no force of any individual, or even of many joined together, could do much to serve us, or to save us. In addition to this personal disinclination, he was ignorant of the exact state of the borough, and, of course, of the likelihood of his success; but yet, though without personal wish or probable hope, he thought himself bound, as a public man, to obey: because, though the victory was doubtful, the value of the contest was incalculable, inasmuch as it must bring before themselves, and before the rest of Ireland, not only an exact picture of their situation, and of the public malady under which they were sinking, but must also make an infallible experiment: it must decide, to the commonest observer, the principles of the disease; the weakness and misery of public distraction; the certain success, if the sufferers could be combined, by the sense of common danger, in a common effort, to throw off the odious incubus that sits upon the public heart, locking up the wholesome circulation of its blood, and paralysing its action. The experiment has now been made, and has failed of immediate success; it was an effort nobly supported by every generous and honest man within the limits of the borough: but its triumph has been delayed by the want of union; by the apostacy of the perfidious; by the vile defection of others, whom opulence could not reconcile to duty and independence. Yet, said he, notwithstanding this sad coalition of miserable men against themselves and their children, I do not hesitate to announce to the generous and honest electors who hear me, that, though their triumph is deferred, their borough is from this moment free, and that terror has ceased to reign over it. You have polled a greater number of honest and independent voters than ever appeared heretofore for your most successful candidate. Look now, for a moment, against what a torrent of adverse circumstances you had to act; the object of your support, personally a stranger, giving public notice that he would not solicit a single individual. The moment a contest was apprehended, corruption took the alarm; and a public officer, in my opinion most unbecomingly, appointed so early a day for the election, as to make all preparation whatsoever on my part impossible. If you remember the indignant laugh that was excited in the course of the poll, when the returning officer demanded of the poll-taker how many had voted for the Master of the Rolls, and how many 'FOR US!' You must, I think, be satisfied that there must be something base in this business. Sad indeed is the detail of this odious and ludicrous transaction; but it is too instructive to be passed over in silence.

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"When the election opened, an old gentleman rose and proposed my gallant opponent, as being a gentleman of '*great influence in the borough*,' and had served it for three parliaments: that is, in other words, a gentleman who had the dregs of its population under his feet, and who had, for three parliaments, been the faithful adherent of every minister, and, upon every vital question, the steady and remorseless enemy, so far as a dumb vote would go, of this devoted island. And, indeed, what could you expect from a gentleman of another country, who could have neither interest *in* you, nor sympathy *for* you, but was perfectly free to *sell* you, or to bestow you, at his pleasure? This motion was seconded, I blush to think of it, I burn at being obliged to state it, by a merchant of Newry, himself a Catholic, himself the uniform witness, as he, together with his Catholic brethren, had been the uniform victims, of the principles of a gentleman whom he thought proper to support. Never shall I forget the figure which the unhappy man made, hesitating, stammering, making a poor endeavour to look angry, as if anger could cast any veil over conscious guilt, or conscious shame, or conscious fear: and to what extent must he have felt all those sensations if he looked forward, not merely to the sentiment of indignation and contempt which he was exciting in the minds of those that he betrayed; but the internal horror that he must feel, when thrust forward to the bar of his own conscience, and the dreadful sentence of expiatory torture which that indignant conscience must pronounce upon him. However, he was bold enough to second the motion; and I think the General is altogether indebted to the virtue of this independent Catholic, and of two other equally virtuous Catholics of Newry, for his final success, if success it can be called.

"Mr. Curran passed on to the circumstances of the test proposed, the most moderate that he had ever witnessed; it was merely that he would not obstinately persevere in betraying the trust reposed in him. And what was his answer? Certainly it was fair and candid, and giving you all the fullest notice of what you had to expect. He said, that he was not an orator; that his principles were those of a soldier; and that whatever question came forward—he would vote as he should think best; that is, in other words, that if you returned him you would send him a mute to parliament, with a parchment in one hand, under the name of a return, containing the *terms* of your capitulation, and a bow-string in the other; that is, that during the debate he would ring the dumb bell; but that, on the division,

'When it became a passing bell,
O! then he'd sing it passing well.'

"Indeed (continued the Master of the Rolls), to touch but passingly upon the subsequent transactions of the election, they are fresh in your minds. You saw those that voted *for their country;* you saw those that voted *against their country*, and *against themselves.* Every honourable, every respectable man within your borough, except the unfortunate Mr. Caulfield and his two associates, were in the former class; but why do I except them? They do not belong to that class of public spirit or honour; you saw the class to which these unfortunate men properly belong. You saw a succession of poor creatures without clothes upon their backs—naked, as if they had been stripped for execution—naked, as if they had been landed from their mothers, consigned to the noble general at the moment of their birth—no part of them covered but their chins, as if nature had stuck a beard upon them in derision of their destiny. Such (said he) has been the contest; such the adverse forces; such too, thus far, the result. But I told you, that the contest was of more value than the victory; that if it did not give you triumph, it would give you wisdom. And to keep this promise I must carry back your reflection to times that have passed us. And I must do that, to shew you, that all our miseries and degradation have sprung from a disunion, cruelly and artfully fabricated by a foreign country, for the base purpose of driving us to suicide, and making us the instrument of our own destruction.

" Here Mr. Curran gave a rapid sketch of the first dawn of dissension in Ireland—the conqueror and the conquered;—a conquest too, obtained, like all the victories over Ireland, by the triumph of guilt over innocence. This discussion, followed up by the natural hatred of the spoiler and the despoiled; this dissension, followed up further by the absurd antipathies of religious sects; this dissension, still followed further by the rivalries of trade. The cruel tyrants of Ireland dreading, that, if Irish industry had not her hands tied behind her back, she might become impatient of servitude, and those hands might work her deliverance. To this growing accumulation of Irish dissension, the miserable James the Second—his heart rotted in the depravity of that France which had given him an interested shelter from the just indignation of his betrayed subjects—put the last hand; and an additional dissension, calling itself political, as well as religious, was superadded. Under this sad coalition of confederating dissensions, nursed and fomented by the policy of England, this devoted country has continued to languish, with small fluctuations of national destiny, from the invasion of the Second Henry to the present time. 'And here,' said he, 'let me be just while I am indignant; let me candidly own, to the noble examples of British virtue, to the splendid exertions of British courage, to their splendid sacrifices, am I probably indebted for my feelings as an Irishman, and my devotion to my country. They thought it madness to trust themselves to the influence of any foreign country; they thought the circulation of the political blood could be carried on only by the action of the heart within the body, and could not be inflicted from without. Events have shewn you that what they thought was just, and that what they did was indispensable; they thought they ought to govern themselves; they thought that at every hazard they ought to make the effort; they thought it more eligible to perish than to fail; and to the God of Heaven I pray, that the authority of so splendid an example may not be lost upon Ireland.' He continued, in adverting to the state of Ireland from the Revolution to the year 1782: 'A sad continuing spectacle of Ireland, disgraced and oppressed, and plundered by two causes; first, she was too enfeebled by dissension to resist; and, secondly, she continued the abject victim of the sordid, insatiable, and implacable tyranny of a foreign country. At length, in 1782, a noble effort was made, and deathless ought to be the name of HIM that made it, and deathless ought to be the gratitude of the country for which it was made—the independence of Ireland was acknowledged. Under this system of asserted independence our progress in prosperity was much more rapid than could have been expected. When we remember the conduct of a very leading noble person upon that occasion—never was a more generous mind, or a purer heart; but his mind had more purity than strength. He had all that belonged to taste, and courtesy, and refinement; but the grand and the sublime of national reform were composed of colours too strong for his eye, and comprised an horizon too outstretched for his vision. The Catholics of Ireland were in fact excluded from the asserted independence of their country. Thus far the result comes to this, that wherever perfect union is not found, complete redress must be sought in vain.'

Mr. Curran proceeded to the fatal measure of the Union, 'the last and mortal blow to the existence of Ireland as a nation; and that a consummation of our destruction achieved by that perpetual instrument of our ruin, our own dissensions. The whole history of mankind records no instance of any hostile cabinet, perhaps of any even internal cabinet, actuated by the principles of honour or of shame. The Irish Catholic was therefore taught to believe, that if he surrendered his country he would cease to be a slave. The Irish Protestant was cajoled into the belief, that if he concurred in the surrender he would be placed upon the neck of an hostile faction—wretched dupe! You might as well persuade the gaoler that he is less a prisoner than the captives he locks up, merely because he carries the key of the prison in his pocket. By that reciprocal animosity, however, Ireland was surrendered; the guilt of the surrender was most atrocious; the consequences of the crime most tremendous and exemplary. We put ourselves into a condition of the most unqualified servitude; we sold our country, and we levied upon ourselves the price of the purchase; we gave up the right of disposing of our properties; we yielded to a foreign legislature to decide whether the funds necessary to their projects or their profligacy should be extracted from us, or be furnished by themselves; the consequence has been, our scanty means have been squandered in her internal corruption as profusely as our best blood has been wasted in the madness of her aggressions, or the feeble folly of her resistance; our debt has, accordingly, been increased more than ten-fold; the common comforts of life have been vanishing; we are sinking into beggary; our poor people have been worried by cruel and unprincipled prosecutions; and the instruments of our government have been almost simplified into the tax-gatherer and the hangman. At length, after this long night of suffering, the morning-star of our redemption cast its light upon us—the mist was dissolved, and all men perceived that those whom they had been blindly attacking in the dark, were, in reality, their fellow-sufferers and their friends. We have made a discovery of the grand principle in politics, that the tyrant is in every instance the creature of the slave; that he is a cowardly and a computing animal; and that in every instance he calculates between the expenditure to be made and the advantage to be acquired. And I, therefore, do not hesitate to say, that if the wretched Island of Man, that *refugium peccatorum*, had sense and spirit to see the force of this truth, she could not be enslaved by the whole power of England. The oppressor would see that the necessary expenditure in whips, and chains, and gibbets, would infinitely countervail the ultimate value of the acquisition; and it is owing to the ignorance of this unquestionable truth that so much of this agitated globe has in all ages been crawled over by a Manx population. This discovery, at last, Ireland has made. The Catholic claimed his rights; the Protestant generously and nobly felt as he ought, and seconded the claim; a silly government was driven to the despicable courage of cowardice, and resorted to the odious artillery of prosecutions; the expedient failed; the question made its way to the discussion of the senate. I will not tire you, said he, with a detail. An House of Commons, who at least represented themselves, perhaps afraid, perhaps ashamed of their employers, became unmanageable tools in the hands of such awkward artists, and were dissolved: just as a beaten gamester throws the cards into the fire in hopes in a new pack to find better fortune. Gentlemen, (continued Mr. Curran,) I was well aware at my rising that you expected nothing like amusement from what I had to say; that my duty was to tell you plain and important truths; to lay before you, without exaggeration or reserve, a fair statement of the causes that have acted upon the national fortune; of the causes that have put you down, and that may raise you up; to possess you with a fair idea of your present position; of what you have to fear, of what you have to hope, and how you ought to act. When I speak of your present position, I would not have you suppose that I mean the actual situation of the borough of Newry; or that I think it much worth while to dwell upon the foolish insolence with which a besotted cabinet has thought fit to insult you, by sending a stranger to your country and your interests, to obtain a momentary victory over your integrity by means of which none of you are ignorant.'

"[Here Mr. Bell, an agent for the General, stood up, and fixed his eyes upon the Master of the Rolls with a very peculiar expression of countenance.]

"'Mr. Seneschal,' said Mr. Curran, 'I demand of you, as returning officer, that I, a candidate, shall be protected, as you are in duty bound to do, from being disturbed by the obscene and unnatural grimaces of a baboon.'

"[Mr. Jebb, the counsel for the Seneschal, immediately interposed, and ordered Mr. Bell to sit down.]

"Mr. Curran resumed—'I do not wonder at having provoked interruption when I spoke of your borough—I told you that from this moment it is free. Never in my life have I so felt the spirit of the people as among you—never have I so felt the throbs of returning life. I almost forgot my own habitual estimate of my own small importance; I almost thought it was owing to some energy within myself when I was lifted and borne on upon the buoyant surge of popular sympathy and enthusiasm. I, therefore, again repeat it, it is the moment of your new birth unto righteousness; your proved friends are high among you; your developed enemies are expunged for ever; your liberty has been taken from the grave, and, if she is put back into the tomb, it can be only by your own parricide, and she must be buried alive.

" 'I have to add for your satisfaction, a statement has been laid before me of the grossest bribery, which will be proved beyond all doubt, and make the return a nullity. I have also received a statement of evidence to show, that more than one-third of those who voted against us had been trampled by bribe and terror into perjury when they swore to the value of their qualification. Some of those houses had actually no existence whatsoever; they might as well have voted from their pasture to give their suffrage; and Nebuchadnezzar, in the last year of his feeding on grass, would have been as competent as they were to vote in Ireland. But I enlarge not upon this topic; to touch upon it is enough for the present, the detail must be reserved for a future occasion, and another place. It belongs only to the hopeless to be angry; do not you, therefore, be angry where you cannot be surprised. You have been insulted, and oppressed, and betrayed; but what better could you hope from such a ministry as their own nation is cursed withal? They hear the voice of suffering England now thundering in their ears; they feel they cannot retain—they are anxious to destroy—they are acting upon the principle of Russian retreat. Pressed upon by the people, and beaten back into their fastnesses, they depopulate as they retire: but what better could you have ever hoped from such men? a motley groupe, without virtue, or character, or talents; the sort of cabinet that you have laughed at on the stage, where the potent, grave, and reverend seniors were composed of scene-shifters and candle-snuffers, robed in old curtains, and wigged from the stores of the theatre. They affected to profess religious distinctions, but they were too grossly ignorant to conceive any such. There is no science in which a man must not know something to qualify him for misconception. I have myself talked with Englishmen upon this subject; you cannot suppose me to allude to the exalted class of persons in that country who have done themselves so much honour by their sympathy and liberality. I speak of an inferior order; indeed of persons like your ministers here. I have asked them what they could find so formidable in the religious principles of the Irish Catholics? and the answer has uniformly been, '*Why, Sir, I never know'd nothink at all of the principles of the Hirish Papists, except their lank hair, and long coats, without no arms in the sleeves; and I thinks the most liberal man will allow that them there are dangerous principles.*'

"'Shall I, my friends, say one serious word to you upon this serious subject? Patriotism is of no one religion; Christianity belongs exclusively to no sect; and moral virtue and social duty are taught with equal exactness by every sect, and practised with equal imperfection by all; and, therefore, wherever you find a little interested bustling bigot, do not hate him; do not imitate him; pity him if you can. I scarcely wish you not to laugh when you look at one of these pearl-divers in theology: his head barely under water, his eyes shut, and an index floating behind him, displaying the precise degree of his purity and his depth. A word or two, (said he,) upon your actual position; and what upon that subject but a word of sadness? What but the monumental inscription upon the head-stone of our grave? All semblance of national independence buried in that grave in which our legislature is interred; our property and our persons are disposed of by laws made in another clime, and made, like boots and shoes for exportation, to fit the wearers as they may. If you were now to consult my learned friend here, and ask him how much of your property belongs to yourself, or for what crime you may be whipped, or hanged, or transported,—his answer would be, 'It is impossible, Sir, to tell you now; but I am told that the Packet is in the Bay.' It was, in fact, the real design of a rash, and arbitrary, and short-sighted projector, at once to deprive you of all power as to your own taxation, and of another power of not very inferior importance, and which, indeed, is inseparably connected with taxation,—to rob you of all influence upon the vital question of peace or war, and to bring all within the control of an English minister. This very power, thus acquired by that detested Union, has been a millstone about the neck of England. From that hour to this, she has been flaring away in her ruinous and wasteful war,—her allies no more,—her enemies multiplied,—her finances reduced to rags,—her people depressed and discontented,—her artisans reduced to the last ebb, and their discontents methodized into the most terrific combinations,—her labourers without employment,—her manufactures without a market. The last entrance in the north, to which they could have looked, being now shut against them, and fastened by a bar that has been reddened in the flames of Moscow. But this, said he, is a picture too heart-rending to dilate upon: you cannot but know it already; and I do not wish to anticipate the direful consequences by which you are too probably destined to feel it further to the quick. I feel it a sort of refuge, to pass to the next topic which I mentioned as calling for your attention, namely, what foundation, what ground we had for hope.'

"Here Mr. Curran described, in terms of affectionate panegyric, the noble and disinterested patriotism which led our Protestant fellow-subjects into an alliance offensive and defensive with their afflicted country, without the aid of its rank, its intellect, and its property. 'Ireland (said he) could do no more for herself now than she has done for centuries heretofore: she lay a helpless hulk upon the water; but now, for the first time, we are indebted to Protestant spirit for the delicious spectacle of seeing her at length equipped with masts, and sails, and compass, and helm; at length she is sea-worthy. Whether she is to escape the tempest, or gain the port, is an event to be disposed of by the Great Ruler of the waters and the winds. If our voyage be prosperous, our success will be doubled by our unanimity: but even if we are doomed to sink, we shall sink with horror! But (said he) am I over sanguine in counting our Protestant allies? Your own country gives you a cheering instance in a noble marquis, retiring from the dissipation of an English court, making his country his residence, and giving his first entrance into manhood to the cause of Ireland. It is not from any association of place that my mind is turned to the name of Moira; to name him is to recognize what your idolatry has given to him for so many years; but a late transaction calls for a word or two; I thought anxiously upon it at the time, and, from that time to this, if he required to be raised, he must have been raised in public opinion by the event of that negociation. He saw that the public in either country could not have any hope from an arrangememt in which the first preliminary was a selfish scramble for patronage, that must have ended in a scramble for power: in which the first efforts of patriotism were for the reformation of water-closets, and the surrender of mop-sticks in the palace; to sink the head, and to irritate the man that wore the crown, instead of making their first measure a restitution of representation to the people, who, if they were as strong as they ought to be, could have nothing to dread from the tinsel of a robe, or the gilding of a sceptre. Let me pass, said he, to another splendid accession to our force in the noble conduct of our rising youth in the election of our university. With what tenderness and admiration must the eye dwell upon the exalted band of young men, the rosy blush of opening life glowing upon their cheeks, advancing in patriotic procession, bringing the first fruits of unfolding virtue,—a sacred offering on the altar of their country,—and conducted by a priest, in every point worthy of the votaries, and of the offering. The choice which they have made of a man of such tried public virtues, and such transcendant talents as Mr. Plunket, is a proof of their early proficiency in sense and virtue. If Mr. Plunket had been sent alone as the representative of his country, and was not accompanied by the illustrious Henry Grattan, I should hesitate to say of him what the historian said of Gylippus, when he was sent alone as a military reinforcement to a distressed ally who had applied for aid to Sparta. Gylippus alone, says the writer, was sent, in whom was concentrated all the energies and all the talents of his country—'*Mittitur Gylippus solus in quo omnium instar Lacedæmoniorum erat.*' I have thought it better, said he, to quote the words of the writer, as being probably more familiar to the learned supporters of my gallant opponent than my translation. It is only due to justice, that upon this subject I add, with whatsoever regret, another word. It would not be candid if I left it possible for you to suspect that my attestation could have been dictated by mere private attachment, instead of being measured by the most impartial judgement. Little, said Mr. Curran, remains for me to add to what I have already said. I said you should consider how you ought to act. I will give you my humble idea upon that point. Do not exhaust the resources of your spirit by idle anger or idle disgust; forgive those that have voted against you here: they will not forgive themselves. I understand they are to be packed up in tumbrils, with layers of salt between them, and carted to the election for the county, to appear again in patriotic support of the noble projector of the glories of Walcheren. Do not envy him the precious cargo of the raw materials of virtuous legislation; be assured all this is of use. Let me remind you before I go of that precept, equally profound and beneficent, which the meek and modest Author of our blessed religion left to the world: 'And one command I give you, that you love one another.' Be assured that of this love the true spirit can be no other than probity and honour. The great analogies of the moral and the physical world are surprisingly coincident: you cannot glue two pieces of board together unless the joint be clean; you cannot unite two men together unless the cement be virtue, for vice can give no sanction to compact, she can form no bond of affection.

" 'And now, my friends, I bid you adieu, with a feeling at my heart that can never leave it, and which my tongue cannot attempt the abortive effort of expressing. If my death do not prevent it, we shall meet again in this place. If you feel as kindly to me as I do to you, relinquish the attestation which I know you had reserved for my departure. Our enemy has, I think, received the mortal blow; but, though he reels, he has not fallen; and we have seen too much upon a greater scale of the wretchedness of anticipated triumph. Let me therefore retire from among you in the way that becomes me and becomes you, uncheered by a single voice, and unaccompanied by a single man. May the blessing of God preserve you in the affection of one another!' "

Notwithstanding this eloquent appeal, Mr. Curran's opponent was returned duly elected; and, though a petition to Parliament was confidently talked of, it was not presented.

The following effusions of generous friendship appeared in the London prints immediately after the death of Mr. Curran was announced. They are the elegant productions of three of the most distinguished writers of the age. They do great honour to the gentlemen who have paid to Mr. Curran's memory so high a tribute of respect. One is from the pen of a gentleman not of his country, but to whom he was well known. In the great lines of the character of his mind they nearly agree; though written without any communication with each other: and it may be mentioned as a circumstance not a little flattering to the Editor, that, in his view of the same subject, taken long before, there is a coincidence of opinion, with very slight and immaterial differences.

The Right Honourable John Philpot Curran expired at nine o'clock on the evening of the 14th of October, 1817, at his house, Amelia-place, Brompton, Middlesex.

From the British Press of October 16, 1817.—"His last moments were so tranquil that those around him could scarcely mark the moment of expiration. It will be some consolation to the friends of Mr. Curran to hear, that though surprised by sickness at a distance from his home, he was not condemned to receive the last offices from the hands of strangers: three of his children, Captain Curran of the Navy, his son at the Irish Bar, and his daughter, Mrs. Taylor, were fortunately in London, and had the mournful gratification of paying the last duties to their illustrious father. Mr. Curran was near seventy years of age, and had been for some time declining rapidly in health and spirits. With the exception of a short excursion to Ireland, he had spent the last twelve months at his house in Amelia-place. The forenoon was generally occupied in a solitary ramble through the neighbouring fields and gardens, and the society of a few friends in the evening; and though the brilliancy of his wit shone to the last moment, he seemed like one who had outlived every thing in life that is worth enjoying. On Thursday last (October 9,) he dined abroad with a party of friends; next morning he felt himself very ill, and he kept his bed until his death.

"Mr. Curran was a native of the county of Cork. His parents had nothing to bestow upon him but the rudiments of a classical education, which he completed in Trinity College, Dublin. Shortly after he was called to the bar he married Miss O'Dell, a lady of respectable family, but slender fortune, with whom he became acquainted on circuit. His splendid talents soon brought him into notice in his profession, in which he obtained a silk gown in the administration of the Duke of Portland. In 1784 we find him seated in the House of Commons, and seconding, with much sportive humour, every effort of the popular party for the emancipation of the country, and the establishment of its commercial freedom and political independence. During the arduous and interesting period in which Mr. Fitzgibbon (late Earl of Clare) filled the office of Attorney-general, he was one of the leading men in opposition, and of course came into frequent collision with that haughty lawyer. The high tone of defence upon legal constitutional questions, with which the Attorney-general endeavoured to bear down his opponents, was more frequently ridiculed by the wit, than combated by the arguments of Mr. Curran. If, in this mode of contest, he did not always repel the blow, he at least evaded its force; and although he could not, on every occasion, boast of victory, he at least escaped defeat. Of one of those contests the issue was more serious; it produced a duel, but which was attended with no injury to either party. This happened in the administration of the late Duke of Rutland. The Duchess of Rutland, and a large party of her female friends, were present in the gallery during the discussion, and the irritation excited by the keenness of Mr. Curran's wit, it may easily be supposed, was not allayed by such a presence. As a lawyer he was not particularly distinguished by the extent of his knowledge or the depth of his researches. He stood in this respect only on an equality with his competitors. It is as an advocate that he outstripped them. So powerful and persuasive were the allurements of his eloquence, that a Dublin jury became afraid of listening to his address, and went into the box upon their guard against his seductive powers. Some of his speeches in defence of many of his unfortunate countrymen have been published, and afford a satisfactory specimen of his eloquence. Next to his eloquence, his acuteness in examining a witness challenged public admiration. He was considered shrewder than Lord Erskine, and more polished than Garrow. His parliamentary speeches seldom possessed the excellence which marked his professional eloquence; they were desultory and irregular, lively bursts and sketches, conceived more in the wantonness of fancy than the serious exertions of his mind; keen strokes of satire, flying shafts of wit, instead of profound reasoning. But the assaults of the Cossack, though not so forcible as those of the Cuirassier, were not without effect; although they might not overturn the judgement, they put political profligacy and corruption to flight. His talents and his attachment to the popular cause rendered him, in the viceroyalty of the Duke of

Bedford, a subject of care next to the late lamented Mr. Ponsonby. While the latter was made Lord Chancellor, an arrangement was made with the late Sir Michael Smith, then Master of the Rolls, by which Mr. Curran was appointed in his place. His friends thought that his interests could not be better consulted, but he was of a different opinion. It did not harmonise with the particular course of his legal knowledge and practice, and he would have preferred the office of Attorney-general, which he flattered himself would have led to the chief seat in the Court of King's Bench. He lived to be convinced of the weakness of this speculation. It served, however, to destroy some old friendships, and afford much uneasiness to his latter days. Mr. Curran enjoyed a pension of 2,700*l.* a year, granted him upon his resigning his office in favour of Sir Wm. M'Mahon, the present Master of the Rolls in Ireland."

From the Morning Chronicle of Oct. 16, 1817. —" *Mr. Curran* is almost the last of that brilliant phalanx, the cotemporaries, and fellow-labourers of Mr. Fox, in the cause of general liberty. Lord Erskine, in this country, and Mr. Grattan, in Ireland, still survive.

" Mr. Curran is one of those characters which the lover of human nature, and of its intellectual capacities, delights to contemplate. He rose from nothing. He derived no aid from rank and fortune. He ascended by his own energies to an eminence, which throws rank and fortune into comparative scorn. Mr. Curran was the great ornament of his time of the Irish bar, and in forensic eloquence has certainly never been exceeded in modern times. His rhetoric was the pure emanation of his spirit, a warming and lighting up of the soul, that poured conviction and astonishment on his hearers. It flashed in his eye, and revelled in the melodious and powerful accents of his voice. His thoughts almost always shaped themselves into imagery, and if his eloquence had any fault, it was that his images were too frequent; but they were at the same time so exquisitely beautiful, that he must have been a rigorous critic, that could have determined which of them to part with. His wit was not less exuberant than his imagination; and it was the peculiarity of Mr. Curran's wit, that even when it took the form of a play on words, it acquired dignity from the vein of imagery that accompanied it. Every jest was a metaphor. But the great charm and power of Mr. Curran's eloquence lay in its fervour. It was by this that he animated his friends, and appalled his enemies; and the admiration which he thus excited was the child and the brother of love.

"It was impossible that a man whose mind was thus constituted should not be a patriot; and certainly no man in modern times ever loved his country more passionately than Mr. Curran loved Ireland. The services he sought to render her were coeval with his first appearance before the public, and an earnest desire for her advantage and happiness attended him to his latest breath.

"The same sincere and earnest heart attended Mr. Curran through all his attachments. He was constant and unalterable in his preferences and friendship, public and private. He began his political life in the connexion of Mr. Fox, and never swerved from it for a moment. Prosperity and adversity made no alteration in him. If he ever differed from that great man, it was that he sometimes thought his native country of Ireland was not sufficiently considered. There was nothing fickle or wavering in Mr. Curran's election of mind. The man that from an enlightened judgement, and a true inspiration of feeling, he chose, he never cooled towards, and never deserted.

"Mr. Curran had his foibles and his faults. Which of us has not? At this awful moment it becomes us to dwell on his excellencies. And as his life has been illustrious, and will leave a trait of glory behind, this is the part of him that every man of a pure mind will choose to contemplate. We may any of us have his faults: it is his excellencies that we would wish, for the sake of human nature, to excite every man to copy in proportion to his ability to do so."

From the Day and New Times of Oct. 20, 1817.—"From the period in which Mr. Curran emerged from the first struggles of an unfriended man, labouring up a jealous profession, his history makes a part of the annals of his country; once upon the surface, his light was always before the eye, it never sank, and was never outshone. With great powers to lift himself beyond the reach of that tumultuous and stormy agitation that must involve the movers of the public mind in a country such as Ireland then was, he loved to cling to the heavings of the wave; he at least never rose to that tranquil elevation to which his early cotemporaries had, one by one, climbed; and never left the struggle till the storm had gone down, it is to be hoped for ever. This was his destiny, but it was his choice, and he was not without the reward which, to an ambitious mind, conscious of eminent powers, might be more than equivalent to the reluctant patronage of the throne. To his habits, legal distinctions would have been only a bounty upon his silence. His limbs would have been fettered by the ermine. But he had the compensation of boundless popular honour, much respect from the higher ranks of party, much admiration and much fear from the lower partisans. In parliament he was the assailant most dreaded; in the law courts he was the advocate whose assistance was deemed the most essential: in both he was an object of all the more powerful passions of man, but rivalry. He stood alone, and shone alone.

"The connexions of his early life, and still more the original turn of his feelings, threw him into the ranks of opposition; in England, a doubtful cause, and long separable from patriotism; in Ireland, at that day, the natural direction of every man of vigorous feeling and heedless genius. Ireland had been, from causes many and deep, an unhappy country. For centuries utterly torpid, or only giving signs of life by the fresh gush of blood from her old wounds, the influence of England's well-intentioned policy was more than lost upon her; it was too limited to work a thorough reformation, but too strong not to irritate; it was the application of the actual cautery to a limb, while the whole body was a gangrene. But a man who loved the influence of this noblest of countries, might hate the government of Ireland. It was a rude oligarchy. The whole influence of the state was in the hands of a few great families. Those were the true farmersgeneral of Ireland; and the English minister, pressed by the difficulties of an empire then beginning to expand over half the world, was forced to take their contract on their own terms. The Viceroy was their Viceroy; only the first figure in that deplorable triumph which led all the hopes and virtues of the country in chains behind the chariot wheels of a haughty faction. It was against this usurpation that the Irish minority rose up in naked but resolute patriotism. The struggle was not long; they hewed their way through the hereditary armour of their adversaries, with the vigour of men leagued in such a cause, and advanced their standard till they saw it waving without one to answer it. In this praise of an admirable time there is no giddy praise of popular violence. The revolution of 1780 was to Ireland what the revolution of a century before had been to the paramount country, a great and reviving effort of nature to throw off that phantom which sat upon her breast, and gave her the perception of life only by the struggles that must have closed in stagnation and death. The policy of the English minister was too enlarged to offer resistance to an impulse awaked on English principles. For him a great service had been done; the building which he had wished to shake was cast down in dust, and the soil left open for the visitations of all the influences of good government. The country had lain before his eye a vast commonage, incapable of cultivation, and breeding only the rank and pernicious fertility of a neglected morass; but he had dreaded to disturb its multitude of lordly pauperism, and hereditary plunder. It was now cleared and enclosed for him, a noble expanse for the out-pouring of all that civilization could give to its various and magnificent nature. The history of those years is yet to be written; whenever the temple is to be erected, the name of Curran must be among the loftiest on its portal.

"But the time of those displays which raised him to his highest distinction as an orator was of a darker shade. His country had risen, like the giant of Scripture, refreshed with wine; her vast original powers doubly excited by an elating but dangerous draught of liberty. She had just reached that state in which there is the strongest demand for the wisdom of the legislator. The old system had been disbanded, but the whole components of its strength survived. The spirit of clanship was still up and girded with its rude attachments; the hatred of English ascendancy had sheathed the sword, but kept it still keen, and only waiting the word to leap from the scabbard. The ancient Irish habits of daring gratification among all ranks, the fallen estate of that multitude who had lived on the pay of political intrigue, the reckless poverty of that overwhelming population to which civil rights could not give bread, all formed a mass of discordant but desperate strength, which only required a sign.—The cross was at length lifted before them, and it was the lifting of a banner to which the whole darkened host looked up, as to an omen of assured victory. The rebellion was met with manly promptitude, and the country was set at peace.' Curran was the leading counsel in the trials of the conspirators, and he defended those guilty and misguided men with a vigour and courage of talent, less like the emulation of an advocate, than the zeal of a friend. He had known many of them in the intercourse of private life; some of them had been his early professional associates. A good man and a good subject might have felt for them all. The English leveller is a traitor; the Irish rebel might have been a patriot. Among us, the revolutionist sets fire to a city, a great work of the wise industry, and old established conveniency of man, a place of the temple and the palace, the treasures of living grandeur, and the monuments of departed virtue. He burns, that he may plunder among the ruins. The Irish rebel threw his firebrand into a wilderness, and if the conflagration rose too high, and consumed some of its statelier and more solid ornaments, it was sure to turn into ashes the inveterate and tangled undergrowth that had defied his rude industry. This was the effervescence of heated and untaught minds. The world was to be older before it learned the curse and unhappy end of the reform that begins by blood. The French revolution had not then given its moral. It was still to the eyes of the multitude like the primal vision in the Apocalypse, a glorious shape coming forth in unstained robes, conquering and to conquer for the world's happiness; it had not yet, like that mighty emblem, darkened down through all its shapes of terror, till it moved against the world, Death on the pale horse, followed by the unchained spirits of human evil, and smiting with plague, and famine, and the sword.

"Some criticism has been wasted on the presumed deficiencies of Curran's speeches on those memorable trials. Throwing off the public fact that those speeches were all uncorrected copies, Curran was of all orators the most difficult to follow by transcription. His elocution, rapid, exuberant, and figurative, in a signal degree, was often compressed into a pregnant pungency which gave a sentence in a word. *The word lost, the charm was undone.* But his manner could not be transferred, and it was created for his style. His eye, hand, and figure were in perpetual speech. Nothing was abrupt to those who could see him; nothing was lost, except when some flash would burst out, of such sudden splendour as to leave them suspended and dazzled too strongly to follow the lustres that shot after it with restless illumination. Of Curran's speeches, all have been impaired by the difficulty of the period, or the immediate circumstances of their delivery. Some have been totally lost. His speech on the trial of the two principal conductors of the conspiracy, the Shears's, barristers and men of family, was made at midnight, and said to have been his most masterly effusion of pathetic eloquence. Of this no remnant seems to have been preserved. The period was fatal to their authenticity. When Erskine pleaded, he stood in the midst of a secure nation, and pleaded like a priest of the temple of justice, with his hand on the altar of the constitution, and all England below prepared to treasure every fantastic oracle that came from his lips. Curran pleaded, not on the floor of a shrine, but on a scaffold, with no companions but the wretched and culpable men who were to be plunged from it hour by hour, and no hearers but the multitude, who crowded anxious to that spot of hurried execution, and then rushed away glad to shake off all remembrance of scenes which had agitated and torn every heart among them. It is this which puts his speeches beyond the estimate of the closet. He had no thought to study the cold and marble graces of scholarship. He was a being embarked in strong emergency, a man and not a statue. He was to address men, of whom he must make himself the master.

With the living energy, he had the living and regardless variousness of attitude. Where he could not impel by exhortation, or overpower by menace, he did not disdain to fling himself at their feet, and conquer by grasping the hem of their robe. For this triumph he was all things to all men. His wild wit, and far-fetched allusions, and play upon words, and extravagant metaphors, all repulsive to our cooler judgements, were wisdom and sublimity before the juries over whom he waved his wand. Before a higher audience he might have been a model of sustained dignity;—mingling with those men he was compelled to speak the language that reached their hearts. Curran in the presence of an Irish jury was first of the first. He skirmished round the field, tried every point of attack with unsuspected dexterity, still pressing on, till the decisive moment was come, when he developed his force, and poured down his whole array in a mass of matchless strength, originality, and grandeur. It was in this originality that a large share of his fascination consisted. The course of other great public speakers may in general be predicted from their outset; but in this man, the mind, always full, was always varying the direction of its exuberance; it was no regular stream, rolling down in a smooth and straight-forward volume;—it had the wayward beauty of a mountain torrent, perpetually delighting the eye with some unexpected sweep through the wild and the picturesque, always rapid, always glancing back sunshine, till it swelled into sudden strength, and thundered over like a cataract. For his noblest images there was no preparation, they seemed to come spontaneously, and they came mingled with the lightest products of his mind. It was the volcano flinging up in succession curls of vapour, and fiery rocks; all from the same exhaustless depths, and with the same unmeasured strength to which the light and the massive were equal. We had the fortune to hear some of those speeches, and repeat it, that to feel the full genius of the man, he must have been heard. His eloquence was not a studiously sheltered and feebly fed flame, but a torch blazing only with the more breadth and brilliancy, as it was the more broadly and boldly waved: it was not a lamp, to live in his tomb. His printed speeches lie before us, full of the errors that might convict him of an extravagant imagination and a perverted taste. But when those are to be brought in impeachment against the great orator, it must be remembered, that they were spoken for a triumph, which they gained; that we are now pausing over the rudeness and unwieldiness of the weapons of the dead, without reference to the giant's hand that with them drove the field. Curran's carelessness of fame has done this dishonour to his memory. We have but the fragments of his mind, and are investigating those glorious reliques, separated and mutilated, like the sculptures of the Parthenon; while they ought to have been gazed on where the great master had placed them, where all their shades and foreshortenings were relief and vigour, —image above image, rising in proportioned and consecrated beauty; as statues on the face of a temple.

"His career in Parliament was less memorable. But the cause lay in no deficiency of those powers which give weight in a Legislative Assembly. In the few instances in which his feelings took a part, he excited the same admiration which had followed him through his professional efforts. But his lot had been cast in the Courts of Law, and his life was there. He came into the House of Commons wearied by the day, and reluctant to urge himself to exertions rendered less imperious by the crowd of able men who fought the battle of Opposition.—His general speeches in Parliament were the sports of the moment, the irresistible overflow of a humorous disdain of his adversary. He left the heavy arms to the habitual combatants, and amused himself with light and hovering hostility. But his shaft was dreaded, and its subtlety was sure to insinuate its way, where there was a mortal pang to be wrung. With such gifts what might not such a man have been, removed from the low prejudices, and petty factions, and desperate objects that thickened the atmosphere of public life in Ireland, into the large prospects, and noble and healthful aspirations that elated the spirit in this country, then rising to that summit of eminence from which the world at last lies beneath her! If it were permitted to enter into the recesses of such a mind, some painful consciousness of this fate would probably have been found to account for that occasional irritation and spleen of heart, with which he shaded his public life, and disguised the homage which he must have felt for a country like England. It must have been nothing inferior to this bitter sense of utter expulsion, which could have made such a being, gazing upon her unclouded glory, lift his voice only to tell her how he hated her beams. He must have mentally measured his strength with her mighty men; Burke and Pitt and Fox were then moving in their courses above the eyes of the world, great luminaries, passing over in different orbits, but all illustrating the same superb and general system. He had one moment not unlike theirs. But the Irish Revolution of 1780 was too brief for the labours or the celebrity of patriotism, and this powerful and eccentric mind, after rushing from its darkness just near enough to be mingled with, and glow in the system, was again hurried away to chillness and darkness beyond the gaze of mankind.

"The details of Curran's private life are for the biographer. But of that portion which, lying between public labours and domestic privacy, forms the chief ground for the individual character, we may speak with no slight panegyric. Few men of his means of inflicting pain could have been more reluctant to use them; few men whose lives passed in continual public conflict could have had fewer personal enemies, and perhaps no man of his time has left sincerer regrets among his personal friends. He was fond of encouraging the rising talent of his profession, and gave his advice and his praise ungrudgingly, wherever they might kindle or direct a generous emulation. As a festive companion he seems to have been utterly unapproached; and has left on record more of the happiest strokes of a fancy at once classic, keen, and brilliant, than the most habitual wit of the age. It may yet be a lesson worth the memory of those who feel themselves neglected by nature, that with all his gifts, Curran's life was not that one which would satisfy a man desirous of being happy. But let no man imagine that the possession of the most fortunate powers, is an excuse for error, still less an obstruction to the sense of holy obedience; our true emblem is in the Archangel, bending with the deepest homage, as he rises the highest in intellectual glory."

The following sketch of Mr. Curran's character is from the pen of a youthful friend, who has proved himself possessed of kindred talents, and bids fair to rival him in fame.

"You have often asked from me, my dear friend, some little sketch of the extraordinary man who has filled such a space in the public eye of Ireland, and whose kindness has afforded me such opportunities of personal observation. The time, to us all the inevitable time, has now come, when it can be done without wounding either his sensibility or his pride. I have seen that fine eye, which once so lightened with intelligence, glazed with the death-film, and that wondrous tongue, which once held every passion captive, silent for ever! Our day has been marked no less by singular events than by the crowd of extraordinary men who have produced them; and perhaps, in all that crowd, there was not one in his peculiar sphere more gifted or more conspicuous than Mr. Curran. Born in the obscure village of Newmarket, near Cork, of very humble parents, he entered upon life without a friend but of his own creation, or a shilling which was not the hard-earned produce of his own exertions. After many a struggle with the thousand impediments which obstruct the progress of unpatronised genius, he was called to the Irish bar, at that time studded with men destined to be the curse or the ornaments of their country. Poor, unknown, unpatronised, surrounded by competitors who had all the advantages of rank and fortune, and continually repressed by a spirit which chivalrously disdained to compromise even the shadow of a principle, he soon rose to the very highest station in that most difficult and disheartening of the learned professions. It was both entertaining and improving to hear his account of the impediments which preceded, and the success which followed, his first forensic exertion. The very first effort placed him at once as an advocate, not only beyond all rivalry, but all imitation. Indeed, to be most eminently distinguished, it was only necessary that he should be known. His powers were such, that it is almost impossible adequately to describe them. With a countenance only not forbidding, a person which had but just escaped distortion, and a voice naturally both shrill and nasal, he was, when excited, graceful, expressive, and harmonious, commanding every passion of the human heart with the same facility that he did the movements of his hand! Perhaps in his transitions, he wanted, fastidiously speaking, *taste*. From the pathetic he would rush abruptly into the humorous, and from the very zenith of sublimity descend into the humblest familiarity of illustration. In the highest heaven he could not resist a jest; and from the very abyss of black letter, he would rise at once into the regions of immortality.

But, if he did, it was only to exhibit the versatility, I should rather say, the despotism, of his genius. The gradual approaches of art were unnecessary. He took every passion by a kind of intellectual *storm*, and the countenance of his hearer, at this moment bedewed with tears, was the next beguiled into involuntary merriment. Witty, eloquent, sublime, pathetic, or convincing; just as it suited either the whim of his mind or the interests of his client, he swept every chord with a master hand, commanding the human instrument to any stop or utterance he thought proper. Another objection raised against the eloquence of Mr. Curran, was his too free indulgence in the exercise of his imagination. It is, however, very unfair to estimate any advocate without reference to the peculiar auditory he addressed. If it be a fault at all, it is the fault of his country. The national taste made his style rather the creation of necessity than of choice. He had studied the Irish character too attentively not to know that their judgement lay, as it were, in a fortress surrounded by the passions, and that to possess the citadel he must first overpower the outworks.

"Personally he was bold, intrepid, and uncompromising; always ready to assert what he thought right, and at any peril to defend what he asserted. Four times was he called to the field in defence of his principles, and four times did he risk a life whose loss his country could not compensate. Those who remember the state trials of 1798, will find it difficult to decide whether his advocacy was the most powerful, or his independence the most admirable. Every hour he defended the life or the liberty of some death-devoted victim at the hazard of his own, willing to die a martyr, if he could not live a free man, and literally lulling the shrieks of the tortured with the divine accents of humanity and justice. The bar found in him a dauntless champion and a brilliant ornament; the client, a zealous, able, uncompromising advocate; the people, a friend not to be purchased or intimidated; and Ireland a son, who in her lifetime cherished, adorned, and defended her; and when she sunk beneath the dagger of the political assassin, threw the imperishable garland of genius upon her tomb. The ruling passion was an affection for his country; and it is with no romantic exaggeration I declare it as my belief, that he would have smiled amidst a death of agony, to relieve her from oppression. Never, and never should she forget it, either in public or in private, was his voice raised except for her interests. This is no trifling merit in an age when the talent which survived the promiscuous venality of to-day, but hoarded itself for the more profitable apostacy of to-morrow. There was not in Ireland, from the days of Swift, so stainless a public character as Curran. Do not imagine I speak of him from mere personal partiality. Kind and affectionate as he ever was to me, it was rather his habit than any undeserved attachment. There was no young man in whom he saw, or fancied, a particle of genius, to whom he did not extend the hand of hospitality and encouragement. His countenance, his encomium, his invaluable advice, were never withheld from honourable ambition, and the more friendless the aspirant, the more he befriended him. His was not the extorted condescension of professional jealousy, unable to withhold applause, and yet unwilling to bestow approval, but the manly and cordial congratulation of a mind which was equally above envy and competition.

. . . .

“ Those who ever enjoyed the classic board of Mr. Curran will not soon forget that rich and varied intellectual banquet, where wit, and eloquence, and learning, held divided empire. It was in those hours of fond relaxation, that he was all himself, alternately delighting, astonishing, informing, wreathing the wings of time with every classic flowret, and pouring on the festive altar exhaustless libations of wisdom and of wit. Enriched himself with all the treasures of genius, he never depreciated the talent of another; and while the humblest contributor was sure of having his little mite exaggerated, the vainest and the highest never rose from his table without feeling a conscious and a contented inferiority.

"Such was the immortal countryman we have lost!—Alas! who is there behind to catch even a remnant of his mantle!

"I have purposely omitted any mention of those errors, from which no human being ever was, or ever will be exempted. Those who have suffered most by them, to their honour let it be told, were the first to forgive them.

"His death-bed was smoothed by the hand of filial piety, by the heir of his name—let me hope, of his talents and his principles."

In delineating the character of Mr. Curran's genius, its peculiar cast and stamp, according to my powers; in separating the parts of it into legal, literary, oratorical, wit, humour, and poetry, I never professed to give the biography of the most valuable, though not always the most amusing portion of human life and action, (the moral part.) For this I have before offered some reasons. Had I proposed so to do—I confess even now, had I leisure—I have not that sort of disposition which could find gratification in the utterance of these aspersions under which he suffered. He did feel them all. In a free country the faults, the errors, the crimes of men, are magnified or diminished by the medium through which they are viewed, In one regard these were enlarged, in the other diminished. The most generous benevolence cannot deny his faults; the charms, the magic of his genius, could not throw a veil over them: yet he had the blessing of friendships; and this among the virtuous. His selection of executors proves his judgement, and that he must have possessed qualities which could have secured the esteem of such men.

So far as relates to myself, though not exactly in all the intimacies of life with Mr. Curran, I had such knowledge of him as was sufficient to enable me to collect most of the anecdotes I have related; and having known him very early, whenever an opportunity occurred I have experienced his kindness. Much could I add, and perhaps yet may add to the anecdotes of his wit, but for the present I must content myself with these few which follow:

Mr. Joseph Atkinson and Mr. Curran went on a visit to Scotland to Lord Moira and Lady Loudon, to Loudon Castle. During their stay in Scotland they passed a day very delightfully with the amiable family of Lord Boyle: Lady Charlotte Boyle, the sister of Lord Hopetown, asked

Mr. Curran what he thought of Edinburgh? "I think, Madam," said he, "speaking of the Ancient and New Town, it is like an old gentleman married to a blooming young bride; he venerably loves and protects her, whilst she graces his side by her beauty and elegant attractions."

During Lord Westmoreland's administration, when a number of new corps were raised in Ireland, (and given as jobs and political favours,) it was observed that when inspected there, the establishment of each regiment was nominally reported to be complete at embarkation for England, but when landed at the other side, many of them had not a quarter of their numbers. "No wonder," said Mr. Curran, "for after being *mustered*, they are afraid of being *peppered*, and off they fly, not wishing to pay for the *roast*."

A person observing how many new houses were erecting in Dublin, said, "*What will they all end in?*" Mr. Curran replied, "they must end in *smoke*."

A lady having shewed him her fan, with the map of *England* upon it, he said, "Madam, it should be the *map of the world*, for it puts all our hearts in a flutter like yourself."

On Mr. Curran's visit into Scotland, he heard that the priest of the temple of Hymen at Gretna Green no longer forged the chains of wedlock; that he was not now a *blacksmith*, but a tobacconist, Mr. Curran said, "*So much the better, for he will make the happy couple give* quid *for* quo."

Mr. Egan the lawyer, when chairman of Kilmainham, had entertained expectations that he would be thence promoted to a seat on the bench; he was perceived by Mr. Curran to have paid great attention to some beautiful woman; and his principles not being exactly of the *Joseph* character, he was jocosely charged by Mr. Curran as to the motives. Egan, fearing that his immorality might become an impediment to his advancement, Lord Manners being at the head of the law department, said, "I am free to confess I am not restrained by *morals*, but by *Manners*." "You should rather have said," observed Mr. Curran, "that your *bad* manners are restrained by his *good* morals."

Of some attorney, whose character for litigation fame dealt severely with, Mr. Curran observed, that every one's hand was raised against him, and his against every one. And he thought him like a rat which had got under the chairs, where every one made a blow at him, but no one could hit him.

Some time after the Union, Mr. Curran was walking by the Parliament House with a certain member, a friend of his, who had supported that measure; this gentleman observed that he never passed that house without the deepest melancholy and regret. "I do not wonder at it," said Mr. Curran, "I never knew a man who had committed murder, who was not haunted by the ghost of the murdered whenever he came to the spot at which the foul deed was done."

When Mr. Curran was at school, the productions of some country poet came out in manuscript; they were praises of the genius of some friend: Mr. Curran was very much captivated with them; and, having but a transient view of them, he requested one of his school-fellows to obtain a copy and send it to him; the latter complied with the request; and, so impressed was he with what Mr. Curran would be, that the verses were accompanied with the following short prophetic lines from his young friend:

"If a fine taste, by genius led,
And wit and humour kindly shed,
Furnish matter for a name,
You'll be, too, some poet's theme."

The following was a compliment paid Mr. Curran at a much later period of life; and is ascribed to Mr. Joseph Atkinson, of the county of Dublin. Having always understood that this was one among his many literary effusions, I hope I intrude not upon him in giving it the authority of his name. It marks the opinion of the writer; and tends to corroborate what I have said of Mr. Curran. I understand it may be found in Mr. Atkinson's printed Poem on Merrion, which I take on the assurance of a friend I cannot doubt:

"In my mind's eye" with fancy gay and free,
I'll seek the friend of mirth and social glee;
Who, from his rural eminence *, looks down
On all the folly and the pomp of town—
Whose beams of wit and eloquence so bright
Blaze round the banquet and the guests delight—
Whose powers resplendent 'mongst our patriots shone,
When Ireland claim'd a *Senate* of her own;
But now his fancy leads the Nine along,
To charm retirement, and adorn his song;
"And often mingles in our friendly bowl
"The feast of reason, and the flow of soul."
And if they ask on whom such talents shine,
The world must own they are, dear CURRAN, thine.

The children of Mr. Curran who now survive him are Richard, who was called to the Irish bar, and for some years has retired from it, under the visitation of a settled melancholy; John, a captain in the Navy; William, now an Irish barrister, and a gentleman of considerable promise; Mrs. Taylor, the wife of an English clergyman; Amelia, unmarried. He had another son, James, who died in the East Indies; and a daughter, who is also dead. Of his brothers I knew two: one who is seneschal of Newmarket; the other was bred an attorney, and was considered a young man of as much natural genius as Mr. Curran himself.

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* His Villa near Rathfarnham, county of Dublin.

I have obtained from Ireland an abstract of Mr. Curran's will. The cause of delaying his interment was to learn if he had given any directions, as to place of burial, manner, or other particulars: his will was silent on these points.

The date of the will is the 19th of September, 1816, and was opened in presence of Mr. Burton, Mr. Richards, Mr. M'Nally, Mr. John Franks, barristers, and Mr. Ponsonby Shaw. It was deposited at Mr. Shaw's bank; and the abstract, which I know to be authentic, is as follows:

"His real and personal property is left in trust to Philpot Fitzgerald for his life-use, with remainder to Mr. Curran's collateral relations; subject to a charge of 5000*l*. for Henry Fitzgerald, brother to Philpot Fitzgerald, called his nephews; a provision on the estate of 80*l.* a-year for Mrs. Curran for her life; an annuity of 50*l.* a-year to his daughter Amelia Curran, in addition to such provision as he before had made for her; a sum of 300*l.* is bequeathed to Mrs. Dickson, of Brompton: some small legacies; but neither of his sons Richard, John, or William, are mentioned in the will or codicil; nor is his daughter Mrs. Taylor. The will appears to be inartificially drawn; and that circumstance, together with the minority of Philpot Fitzgerald and Henry Fitzgerald, it is supposed, will make it necessary to have a bill filed to carry the trusts into execution. Thomas Quin, John Franks, John Glover, and Charles Burton, Esquires, are named trustees and executors.

He had in the Irish funds from ten to twelve thousand pounds in the 3½ per cents, stock in his own name. The Priory was the whole of his freehold estate. The interest he had in a lease of his former residence in the county of Cork had expired. He also had some property in the American funds, but I cannot at present ascertain its amount: it is supposed not to have been considerable.

Since the above was written Mr. Curran's interment took place, on Tuesday the 4th day of November. His funeral was private, and was attended by his own family, and a few friends.

His remains were deposited in a vault at Paddington. On his coffin he is described to have died aged sixty-seven; and on it might have been justly inscribed,

NON OMNIS MORIAR.

"I come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him.
The evil, that men do, lives after them;
The good is oft interred with their bones;
So let it be with Cæsar." Shakespear.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.—See page 6.

In the kingdom of Siam, which is situated in a large vale between two ridges of mountains, its river Meinham, that is, *The Mother of Waters*, is celebrated among Oriental rivers. The trees on the banks of this river are finely illuminated with swarms of fire-flies, which emit or conceal their light as uniformly as if it proceeded from a machine of the most exact contrivance.

Though this *morceau* of natural history would be sufficient for the present purpose, yet, for its curiosity, it may not be uninteresting to subjoin the account of these beautiful insects, as related by Dr. Shaw in his Zoology, vol. vi. part 1. page 144, &c.

"The Fulgora Lanternaria, or Peruvian Lantern Fly, is undoubtedly one of the most curious of insects: it is of a very considerable size, measuring nearly three inches and a half from the tip of the front to that of the tail, and about five inches and a half from wing's end to wing's end, when expanded: the body is of a lengthened oval shape, roundish or subcylindric, and divided into several rings or segments: the head is nearly equal to the length of the rest of the animal, and is oval, inflated, and bent slightly upwards: the ground-colour is an elegant yellow, with a strong tinge of green in some parts, and marked with numerous bright nut-brown variegations in the form of stripes and spots: the wings are very large, of a yellow colour, most elegantly varied with brown undulations and spots, and the lower pair are decorated by a very large eye-shaped spot on the middle of each, the iris or border of the spot being red, and the centre half red and half semi-transparent white: the head or lantern is pale yellow, with longitudinal red stripes. This beautiful insect is a native of Surinam and many other parts of South America, and during the night diffuses so strong a phosphoric splendor from its head or lantern that it may be employed for the purpose of a candle or torch; and it is said, that three or four of the insects tied to the top of a stick, are frequently used by travellers for that purpose. The celebrated Madam Merian, in her work on the insects of Surinam, gives a very agreeable account of the surprise into which she was thrown by the first view of the flashes of light proceeding from these insects. 'The Indians once brought me,' says she, 'before I knew that they shone by night, a number of these lantern flies, which I shut up in a large wooden box. In the night they made such a noise that I awoke in a fright, and ordered a light to be brought, not knowing from whence the noise proceeded. As soon as we found that it came from the box, we opened it; but were still much more alarmed, and let it fall to the ground in a fright, at seeing a flame of fire come out of it; and as many animals as came out, so many flames of fire appeared. When we found this to be the case, we recovered from our fright, and again collected the insects, highly admiring their splendid appearance.'

"Dr. Darwin, in a note to some lines relative to luminous insects, in his beautiful poem of the Loves of the Plants, makes Madam Merian affirm that she drew and finished her figure of the insect by its own light. On examination, how-doubts about it. It is not stated to me what these important consultations were about. From M'Cann he heard that a *Baronial* meeting was to be at Bond's on the 12th of March, and that there was *material business to transact*, and desired Reynolds to attend—that is all that Reynolds heard from M'Cann, and M'Cann is now no more, and this part of the case is in doubt and obscurity. For my part I am not satisfied that any thing criminal did pass at the meeting at Bond's on the 12th of March.—No man can say so—on the evidence produced they do not say that,—they only do *suppose* there was. Were the jury to judge of their own present view, I do not think they would come justly with their verdict of condemnation.

"Bond has been resident in this city twenty years; in your walks of life, gentlemen of the jury, you never heard any thing to his prejudice before this charge. I know my duty to my client, and must tell you, if you have had prejudices I know you will discard them; I am not paying you any compliment, I have spoken under the feelings of an Irishman during the course of these trials; I have endeavoured to speak to your understandings; I have not ventured to entreat you on behalf of my client, because I am sure you will give your justice and your merits free operation, in your minds and consciences, at this trial. I am sure you will try the cause fairly, and admit every circumstance into your reflexions: in a case between the crown and the prisoner I have not ventured to address you on the public feelings at this important crisis; you will preserve the subject for the sake of the law, and preserve the law for the sake of the crown. You are to decide by your sober and deliberate understandings, and hold the balances equal between the crown and the subject; for you are called upon to pronounce your sentence of condemnation or acquittal of the prisoner at the bar. If you should be mistaken in your verdict it cannot shake the safety of the state; you are called upon with the less anxiety, because whichever way your verdict may be, you are not to be told, remember the safety of your king, or your own safety; you are to have in recollection your solemn oath, to decide according to the evidence, and give such a verdict as may always be satisfactory to your consciences at the last moment of your existence. The court will tell you it is your province to decide on matter of fact, and as to opinion on matter of law the court will explain that to you. Your verdict can never die. As to my opinions of the law, whatever they may be, I shall never have an opportunity of uttering to you again; your verdict will stamp infamy on the prisoner, or support the throne of the law; I need not remind you that the present moment is aweful. My friends, if you suffer your consciences to be influenced, to be degraded, into opinions of the consequences of your verdict; you are bound to decide by the evidences, the glorious privilege of trial by jury!!! If martial law must cut the thread of brotherly affection, the necessity of it will cease, for verdicts of honest jurors will restore your country to peace and tranquillity, and the liberties of your country will by that means be secured; the supreme government of a nation be protected and supported, whatever the form of that government may be. Let me, however, ask, is there no species of law to be resorted to but terror? let me observe to you, that the moral law is destroyed when it is stained with the effusion of blood; and it is much to be regretted, when the terrors of the criminal law are obliged to be resorted to, to enforce obedience to the common law of the land by the people, for the sword may cover the land with millions of deluded men. Is it become necessary to hurl destruction round the land till it shivers into a thousand particles, to the destruction of all moral law, and all moral obligations?

"Let me ask, will you, gentlemen, give a verdict through infirmity of body, or through misrepresentations, or through ignorance? you by your verdict will give an answer to this. Gentlemen of the jury, you will weigh in your minds that many inhuman executions did take place in former times; though the then accused underwent the solemnity of a trial, the verdicts of those jurors are not in a state of annihilation, for they remain on the page of history as a beacon to future jurors. The judges before *whom* the then accused were tried have long since paid the debt of nature; they cannot now be called to account why they shrunk from their duty. I call upon you, gentlemen of the jury, to be firm in the exercise of the solemn duty you are now engaged in; should you be of opinion to bring in a verdict of condemnation against my unfortunate client, for myself I ought to care nothing what impressions may actuate your minds to find such a verdict; it little regardeth me; but it much regardeth you to consider what kind of men you condemn to die, and, before you write their bloody sentence, consider maturely whether the charge against the prisoner be fully proved. If you should, on the evidences you have heard, condemn the prisoner to death, and afterwards repent it, I shall not live among you to trace any proof of your future repentance.

"I feel myself impressed with the idea in my breast that you will give your verdict of acquittal of the prisoner at the bar; and that by your verdict you will declare on your oaths that you do not believe one syllable that Mr. Reynolds has told you. Let me entreat you to put in one scale the base, the attainted, the umfounded, the perjured witness, and in the opposite scale let me advise you to put the testimony of the respectable witnesses produced against Mr. Reynolds, and the witnesses to the prisoner's hitherto unimpeached character, and you will hold the balances with justice, tempered with mercy, as your consciences in future will approve. Let me depart from the scene of beholding human misery, should the life of my client, by your verdict, be forfeited. Should he live by your verdict of acquittal, he would rank as the kindest father and protector of his little children, as the best of husbands and of friends, and ever maintain that irreproachable character he has hitherto sustained in private life. Should our witnesses not exculpate the prisoner from the crimes charged on him to the extent as charged in the indictment, I pray to God to give you the judgement and understanding to acquit him."

Mr. Curran had occasion to hire a servant; and wishing to procure a person of good character and respectable appearance, he requested a friend to look out for such. The friend was a wag, and had very lately dismissed his own servant, who happened to be the reverse of what Mr. Curran wished for. The friend had two objects to gratify; one to amuse himself with Mr. Curran, the other, to humble the presumptuous expectations of an arrogant, dishonest, and conceited fellow, whom, on account of his vanity, &c. he had discharged.

The candidate was shown up one morning to Mr. Curran; his appearance was much in his favour. He was dressed in the best fashion of a Bond-street beau. Mr. Curran was for a moment under a mistake; observing him unfolding some papers, and conceiving him to be no less than some gallant defendant in a *crim. con.* action, and that he came to retain him, he requested him to take a chair, and asked him if he had had breakfast. The other answered by producing his discharges. Mr. Curran, perceiving his error, proceeded to business; and asked him, after the production of his credentials, "what wages he would expect?" to which he answered, "My last wages at Sir Thomas ——— were 100*l.* a year, and two suits of coloured clothes." Mr. Curran inwardly started, and observed, "You, Sir, to be sure, are highly noticed by those with whom you have lived; and, from your appearance, and the strong recommendations you have got, even the value you set upon yourself cannot be considered too high; and, if all other matters could be understood, possibly no difference may arise on this head: but, as my occasions demand particular and punctilious attention to hours, I would be glad to know what time you would wish to devote to yourself." "Why, Sir, from one to five o'clock, as I generally ride out each day." "But if you get these hours, would you be quite exact in your return?" "Certainly, Sir." "What do you generally drink after dinner?" "Why, Sir, my last allowance was one bottle of wine a day." "Are you quite certain that a moderate portion of wine would have no injurious effect?" "Oh! certainly not, Sir," with a smile. "Pray, Sir, am I to understand you, that you keep your own horses, or am I to keep them for you?" "Why, Sir, out of such small wages, it would be quite impossible that I could keep my own horses." "Well, Sir," said Mr. Curran, "I think I now pretty well understand you: let me see, between wine, wages, clothes, horses, keeping, &c. &c. your service may stand me about 350*l.* a year." "Why, something thereabout, Sir." Wearied with this creature's impudent, arrogant expectations, he ended, by saying, "My good friend, there remains but one point of difference between us, which you may easily adjust; it entirely rests with you: suppose we were to change sides; for on these terms, I assure you, I should anxiously desire to become your very *humble servant!*"

There were two gentlemen of the Irish bar, one a northern, the other a southern: they were tall as poplars: of them he said, "One is the north pole, the other the south pole." One of them being seen in London walking with Mr. Curran, some person asked him who that extraordinary man was, that so much resembled Lismahago, and what was his business to London? Mr. Curran replied, "that though he was one of his *longest* acquaintance, yet he did not precisely know what his business to London was, except, perhaps, to peep down the chimneys of the Londoners, to see what they had for dinner." One of those gentlemen had, by the length of his legs, so annoyed an English lady who sat opposite to him in a public coach, that, when he proposed to some of the company to take a walk for a short stage, on his going out he observed, "I think it will be of great use to me to *stretch* my legs." "Good God! (the lady remarked,) Sir, if you do, there will be no enduring you, they are so long already."

Mr. Mahaffy, (who now presides in the Admiralty Court,) one of those tall gentlemen, was retained by Archdeacon Verschoyle in a cause which was instituted to try his right to a certain church. In one of the stages of the trial, the Archdeacon despondingly asked Mr. Curran (who was of counsel for him,) his opinion as to the event of the suit. Mr. Curran gave him every hope; and, pointing to Mr. Mahaffy, observed, "My dear Archdeacon, as you have *retained* the spire, the church can be in no danger."

Swift has said, that vanity is inversely as judgement. Part of this may be true. Praise certainly becomes an excitement, and draws out the energies of the soul. If nature has ordained it so, we cannot alter that rule; but our own self-love too frequently and too freely enters into the condemnation of that weakness; and a conspiracy, founded on that feeling, inclines us to give an unlimited credit to the most improbable imputations which exaggeration may cast upon it.

It so happened, that in very many instances of greatness, this alloy may be found to have intermixed itself. We confine ourselves to the instances familiar in the lives of Demosthenes and of Cicero. Mr. Curran certainly encroached much less on this female property than other men similarly circumstanced: he was not always speaking of Catiline or of Clodius; nor did he exact the homage of flattery: when it came, he received it with hospitality; and it was a welcome guest: when it flowed with spontaneity and sincerity, he took intoxicating draughts of it. There were a few of his early country friends with whom he continued in habits of affectionate intimacy. One of them he had on frequent visits at the Priory. He was a mighty hunter, and a very good-natured and well-tempered man; devoted to Mr. Curran with the sincerity of an early attachment. On the chase he was eloquent; but after that subject became exhausted, he scarcely had one other left him: yet in this gentleman's society Mr. Curran found himself very happy. Some friends asked him, how it was that his taste did not revolt at passing so many dull nights with him. "I am very much gratified by those recollections he always brings me back to, and it is with his heart I hold communion; nor can you imagine what pleasure his good humour and singularities afford me. He is an excellent man." I once asked him, said Mr. Curran, how he, who was not fond of books or of music, could amuse himself in the country on a wet day, confined within doors, as he frequently was; and his account I will give you in his own way: "Music and books, by J—s, I have both, and I amuse myself *wid um;* I have an ould rum of a fiddle, and I rasps that till I bodders myself, and then I falls asleep." "Well, and when you awake, how are you amused?" "Why then I takes up a book, I think they call it Tom Jones, and I reads that till I falls asleep again; and its always new to me, for I forgets it as fast as I reads it." After this specimen of companionship, said Mr. Curran, do you think my friend so dull as you conceived him to be?

Mr. Curran was much delighted with hunting; and from this friend he had the pure classic of the chase, with all the Western twang.

Mr. Curran was a lover of his country; and in his writings, speeches, and conversation, uniformly held out its people as a race greatly gifted with all the qualities of head and of heart. If he loved England, he certainly loved Ireland better; and he seemed to have thought in the words of the poet,—

> "Though England's our father, and Ireland's our mother,
> "Yet one side, we know, is much surer than t'other."

In seriousness or in mirth he passed no occasion where he could advance the character of his country. He spoke his opinions with sincerity; and he acted uniformly upon them.

Of some person who voted for the Union, and owed his elevation to his vote, he observed, "that he was the foulest bird that ever perched upon the ruins of a broken constitution."

To illustrate the humour of his countrymen, he frequently condescended to relate anecdotes of their peculiar turn of thought and expression; and his imitations were unequalled. A body of Irish chairmen were basking in the sun, in Pall Mall, as he was passing by; one of them, with great seriousness, asked his companions, do you know, boys, what was now running in my head? I was just this moment ruminating on the reason why it is, that you always see a dog turning round and round and round before he lies down. Another of them paused, and replied, I was often thinking about that self-same thing myself; and there can be no other reason for it but this, that the fellow is always looking round and round, till he finds out the head of his bed.

A country friend of his had planted an orchard on a light surface, with a stiff cold clay subsoil. He took his wise man to see the trees, when out in full blossom in the month of May, and asked his opinion, if it was not one of the most thriving orchards, and the most promising set of trees he had seen; the other replied, "do not say a word to them for a while, they will too soon find out where they are."

A steady church-going Protestant, an elderly gentleman, married a Popish lady, who made her terms, that he would turn over to her religion. For years after, he abstained from going to church. However, he was met by an old friend, on a Sunday about church-time, who pressed him to come and hear the service; at the same moment came up a catholic friend; and he also expostulated with him, and requested him to come to mass; but what either urged had no effect. Ashamed to go back, or to go forward, and pressed for his reasons for deserting the word of God, both at church and at mass, he excused himself by saying, "It is so long since I had the old prayers that I forget them, and I never learned the new. So where is the use of my going to hear either one or the other of them?"

An old barrister, probably second to none in worth, in wit, and in humour, being suspected of having an early attachment to Popery, was attacked by the clumsy jests of a gay young gentleman, who did not measure his distance or his danger; he was forward and assuming; and the sun shone bright that morning to every person in the hall but to him. It was Saturday. He placed his unhallowed hands upon the sides of his acquaintance, and said, "Yesterday being Friday, you must have fared sumptuously; and I dare say you have now a great deal of the Pope in your belly." The other looked wickedly; and, surveying him, said, "Be that as it may, it is quite certain you have a d——d deal of the *Pretender* in your *head*."

In one of the stages of our good King's malady, it was announced in one of the bulletins of health, that his Majesty had been so far recovered, as to be able to take the air on horseback. "Then," said Mr. Curran, "all this work about appointing a regent is gone for nothing. What happiness will be diffused among his Majesty's subjects, when they learn that he is now able to take the reins!"

He was told a story of a dull fellow who prided himself very much on the rare accomplishments of peeling the skin from an apple without breaking it, and also on his superior excellence in pulling brass nails from chairs with his fingers; "Oh! yes, Lord Chesterfield has laid it down that, even in picking straws, a man ought to do it in the best manner; and this gentleman has certainly done his work *ad unguem.*"

It has been observed of Plutarch, that the man whom he would describe, is said to occupy him more than the events; and, in delineating individuals, he does not accumulate particulars, but contents himself in giving select traits.

He who ventures to depart from the rule contained in this remark must feel something forced upon him, from other causes to justify the departure. Plutarch is not without his censures, and among other objections to his venerable name is this; that penetrating as his mind was, he attempted to lead the mind of others, by conclusions formed by himself, instead of furnishing the detail of the materials from which his deductions flowed, thus denying to his readers the complimentary exercise of their own understandings, denying to curiosity the various knowledge on which results should rest, and cooking for his own palate without consulting the tastes of his guests.

What weight his observation, or those objections may be entitled to, may be to the curious of some importance. Without presuming to derogate from an authority now sanctioned by the judgement of his own and of after times, it may be just to remark, that his principle could never content those, who are more solicitous for the anecdote, than for any abstractions of the writer: it is with his mind they wish to converse, and the desire is to have perpetuated the indications of that mind from the authority of its own testimony, and preferably by the narrative of particulars; and would that I had less to apologize for their scantiness than for their accumulation!

It is great boldness to depart from a course, or make a deviation from the charts which Plutarch has drawn, and by which antiquity has steered itself; but as astronomy and navigation presumed upon changes, may not biography be pardoned? Mr. Curran's name has spread over all the regions inhabited by taste and genius.

England likes plain dishes; Scotland, enlightened as it is, by philosophy and criticism, would mock our preparation; that country, proud of its intellectual manufactory, would prefer the unwrought materials. America will take our coarse things; all must be satisfied, and present and future times would justly prefer the substantial detail to traits, however judiciously selected: I therefore prefer to content general curiosity in the manner here adopted than by any sophistication to render this effort unsatisfactory, perhaps ridiculous, by chiming in with a guide, however well directing, and which in politics and war, and all that relates to the great concerns of human life and character, Buonaparte conceived to be his best adviser, and took him to his pillow, and consulted him when he would not commit himself to his counsellors: for prosperity as well as adversity makes strange bedfellows. Therefore, with a perpetual recurrence to Mr. Curran's wit and humour, for they are the themes to dwell upon, I resume them.

He was engaged on behalf of a plain tradesman, a citizen of Dublin, who had been ill-treated, where insult was added to injury, and where the man was horse-whipped, beaten down, and falsely imprisoned. He complained through Mr. Curran to a court of justice, and a jury listened to his tale of woe and of sufferings, which wanted not the colouring of imagination; it was most affectingly told by his counsel: he used no ornaments to dress out the victim which had already suffered so much. His appeals were deeply affecting, because natural. He gave up to the jury the case of an innocent and oppressed man in terms which were directed to the heart,—the jury and the audience were touched: but the client, who heard all, was so overwhelmed that he burst forth from a silence he had before been noticed for, into a sudden exclamation, accompanied with tears: "Oh! my Lord, by the living G— all the counsellor has told you is every word of it true, but till this moment I never knew I had been half so cruelly ill-treated."

The following will be found truly characteristic of the sportiveness of Mr. Curran's fancy. Shortly after the establishment of our colony at Botany Bay, when the population was fast increasing, Mr. Curran in one of his speeches upon a criminal trial observed "that should the colony thrive, and become a regular civil government, what a pleasant thing it would be to have the laws administered by judges reprieved at the gallows; by justices who had picked pockets; by counsellors who had pleaded at the bar for their lives; by lawyers who had set the law at defiance; to see housebreakers appointed to protect the public property; highwaymen entrusted with the public money; rioters invested with commissions of the peace, and shoplifters to regulate the markets. Such, however, said he, were the original people of Rome; and such the foundation of the states of America."

When we contrast the moral character of countries, when we know that in England the foul ever, I cannot find the least authority for this declaration on the part of Madam Merian, who relates only what is above stated, with the observation, that the light of one of the insects is sufficient to read a common newspaper by. It may be proper to add, that this celebrated lady falls into a mistake in supposing that a species of Cicada, which she represents on the same place with the lantern fly, was its larva; and that it gradually was transformed into the Fulgora. This information, indeed, she merely gives as the popular report, but at the same time takes the liberty of representing the insect in its supposed half-complete state, with the head of the Fulgora, and the wings and body of the Cicada.

"I cannot conclude the description of this species, without giving due praise to the exquisite representation of Roësel, who has engraved it both with its wings closed and expanded. Degeer observes, that the beautiful colours with which Roësel's figures are adorned, were not perceptible either in the specimens examined by himself, or in those described by Reaumur. In the Leverian Museum, however, are a fine pair of these insects, which, though now somewhat faded, at their first introduction fully justified the colouring of Roësel and Merian, and left no doubt of the richly variegated appearance of the animal in its living state."

EXTRACTS FROM PLUTARCH.

See Note B.—Page 45.

Of Demosthenes.

Plutarch says, "We are told, when the speeches of Demosthenes had been ill received, and he was going home with his head covered, and in the greatest distress, Satyrus, the player, who was an acquaintance of his, followed, and went in with him. Demosthenes lamented to him, 'That, though he was the most laborious of all the orators, and had almost sacrificed his health to that application, yet he could gain no favour with the people; but drunken seamen, and other unlettered persons, were heard; and kept the rostrum, while he was entirely disregarded.' 'You say true,' answered Satyrus, 'but I will soon provide a remedy, if you will repeat to me some speech in Euripides or Sophocles.' When Demosthenes had done, Satyrus pronounced the same speech; and he did it with such propriety of action, and so much in character, that it appeared to the orator quite a different passage. He now understood so well how much grace and dignity action adds to the best oration, that he thought it a small matter to premeditate and compose, though with the utmost care, if the pronunciation and propriety of gesture were not attended to. Upon this he built himself a subterraneous study, which remained to our times; thither he repaired every day to form his action and exercise his voice, and he would often stay there for two or three months together, shaving one side of his head, that, if he should happen to be ever so desirous of going abroad, the shame of appearing in that condition might keep him in."

"Hence it was concluded, that he was not a man of much genius, and that all his eloquence was the effect of labour: a strong proof of this seemed to be, that he was seldom heard to speak any thing extempore; and though the people often called upon him by name, as he sat in the assembly, to speak to the point debated, he would not do it unless he came prepared; for this many of the orators ridiculed him. Pytheas, in particular, told him that all his arguments smelled of the lamp. Demosthenes retorted sharply upon him; 'Yes, indeed; but your lamp and mine, my friend, are not conscious to the same labours.' Eratosthenes says, that in his extemporaneous harangues, he often spoke as from a supernatural impulse; and Demetrius tells us, that in an address to the people, like a man inspired, he once uttered this oath in verse;

'By earth, by all her fountains, streams, and floods.'

"It is said, that a man came to him one day, and desired him to be his advocate against a person from whom he had suffered by assault. 'Not you, indeed,' said Demosthenes, 'you have suffered no such thing.' — 'What!' said the man, raising his voice, 'have I not received those blows?' 'Ay, now,' replied Demosthenes, 'you do speak like a person that has been injured.' So much, in his opinion, do the tone of voice and the action contribute to gain the speaker credit in what he affirms.

"When a rascal, surnamed Chalchus, attempted to get up on his late studies and long watching, he said, 'I know my lamp offends thee; but you need not wonder, my countrymen, that we have so many robberies, when we have thieves of brass and walls of clay.' Though more of his sayings might be produced, we shall pass them over, and go on to seek the rest of his manners and character in his actions and political conduct.

"Theopompus also acquaints us, that the Athenians were for having him manager of a certain impeachment, and insisted upon it in a tumultuary manner: he would not comply, but rose up and said, 'My friends, I will be your counsellor whether you will or not; but a false accuser I will not be, how much soever you may wish it.'

"As to other remarks of honour and respect, Demosthenes had not an equal share in them. They were bestowed principally upon Æschines and Philocrates. They therefore were large in the praise of Philip on all occasions; and they insisted, in particular, on his eloquence, his beauty, and even on his being able to drink a great quantity of liquor. Demosthenes, who could not bear to hear him praised, turned these things off as trifles. The first, he said, was the property of a sophist, the second of a woman, and the third of a sponge; and not one of them could do any credit to a king.

"Theophrastus relates, that when the allies desired their contributions might be settled, Euobolus, the orator, answered, that war could not be brought to any set diet.

"As to Demosthenes, he is said to have had such confidence in the Grecian arms, and to have been so much elated with the courage and spirit of so many brave men calling for the enemy, that he would not suffer them to regard any oracles or prophecies. He told them that he suspected the prophetess herself of Philipizing. He put the Thebans in mind of Epaminondas, and the Athenians of Pericles, how they reckoned such things as were pretexts of cowardice, and pursued the plan which their reason had dictated. Thus far Demosthenes acquitted himself like a man of spirit and honour; but in the battle of Thermodon he performed nothing worthy of the glorious thing he had spoken.

"He quitted his post, he threw away his arms, he fled in the most infamous manner; and was not ashamed, as Pytheas says, to bely the inscription he had put upon his shield in golden characters, 'To Good Fortune.' On this occasion Demosthenes addressed the people in the fable of the sheep who were to give up their dogs to the wolves before they would grant them peace; by which he insinuated that he and the other orators were the guards of the people, as the dogs were of the flock; and that Alexander was the great wolf they had to treat with. As we see merchants carrying about a small sample in a dish by which they sell large quantities of wheat: so you in us, without knowing it, deliver up the whole body of the citizens. These particulars we have from Aristobulus of Alexandria.

"Harpalus perceiving that Demosthenes was much pleased with one of the king's cups, and stood admiring the workmanship and fashion, desired him to take it in his hand and feel the weight of the gold; Demosthenes being surprised at the weight, and asking Harpalus how much it might bring, he smiled, and said, It will bring you twenty talents; and as soon as it was night he sent him the cup with that sum. For Harpalus knew well enough how to distinguish a man's passion for gold by his pleasure at the sight, and the keen looks he cast upon it. Demosthenes could not resist the temptation; it made all the impression upon him that was expected: he received the money like a garrison into his house, and went over to the interest of Harpalus. Next day he came into the assembly with a quantity of wool and bandages about his neck; and when the people called upon him to get up and speak, he made signs that he had lost his voice; upon which some that were by said, 'It was no common hoarseness that he had got in the night, it was a hoarseness occasioned by swallowing gold and silver.' Afterwards, when all the people were apprised of his taking the bribes, and when he wanted to speak in his own defence, they would not suffer him, but raised a clamour, and expressed their indignation. At the same time somebody or other stood up and said, sneeringly, 'Will you not listen to the man with the cup?'

"It is said, that when he was not far from the city, he perceived some of his adversaries following, and endeavoured to hide himself; but they called to him by name, and when they came nearer, desired him to take some necessary supplies of money which they had brought with them for that purpose. They assured him that they had no other design in following, and exhorted him to take courage: but Demosthenes gave into more violent expressions of grief than ever, and said, 'What comfort can I have when I leave enemies in this city more generous than it seems possible to find friends in any other?'

"Phylarchus tells us, that in one of the cities of Arcadia Pytheas and Demosthenes spoke with great acrimony; the one in pleading for the Macedonians, and the other for the Greeks. Pytheas is reported to have said, 'As some sickness is always supposed in the house into which ass's milk is brought, so the city which an Athenian embassy ever enters must necessarily be in a sick and decaying condition.' Demosthenes turned the comparison against him by saying, 'As ass's milk never enters but for curing the sick, so the Athenians never appear but for remedying some disorder.'

"The people of Athens were so much pleased with this repartee that they immediately voted for the recal of Demosthenes. A galley was sent to fetch him from Ægina, and when he came up from the Pyræus to Athens the whole body of citizens went to meet and congratulate him on his return; insomuch that there was neither a magistrate nor priest left in the town. Demetrius of Magnesia acquaints us, that Demosthenes lifted up his hands towards heaven in thanks for that happy day. 'Happier,' said he, 'is my return than that of Alcibiades. It was through compulsion that the Athenians restored him, but me they have restored from a motive of kindness.'"

Thus far of Demosthenes.—Plutarch, in the parallel of Demosthenes with Cicero, says: "Their tempers were discernible in their modes of writing: that of Demosthenes, without any embellishment of wit and humour, is always grave and serious; neither does it smell of the lamp, as Pytheas tauntingly said, but of the water-drinker, of the man of thought, of one who was characterized by the austerities of life. But Cicero, who loved to indulge his vein of pleasantry, so much affected the wit, that he sometimes sunk into the buffoon; and by affecting gaiety upon the most serious occasions to serve his client, offended against the rules of propriety and decorum. Thus, in his Oration for Cælius, he asks, 'Where is the absurdity if a man, with affluence at command, indulge himself in pleasure? it would be madness, (not what is in his power,) particularly when some of the philosophers place the *summum bonum* in pleasure.'" This opinion of Plutarch, however, is doubted. See note to the last edition of his *Lives* as published by *Wrangham*.

"He had both capacity and inclination to learn all the arts; nor was there any branch of science that he despised, yet he was much inclined to poetry; and there is still extant a poem entitled, *Pontius Eglaucus*, which was written by him when a boy in tetrameter verse. In process of time, when he had studied this art with greater application, he was looked upon as the best poet, as well as the greatest orator in Rome. His reputation for oratory still remains, notwithstanding the considerable changes that have since been made in the language; but, as many ingenious poets have appeared since his time, his poetry has lost its credit, and is now neglected.

"Yet, it is said, that his turn for action was naturally as defective as that of Demosthenes; and, therefore, he took all the advantage he could from the instruction of Roscius, who excelled in comedy, and of Æsop, whose talents lay in tragedy. In consequence of helps, Cicero found his powers of persuasion not a little assisted by action and just pronunciation. But as for those orators who gave in to a bawling manner, he laughed at them, and said, 'Their weakness made them get up into clamour, as lame men get on horseback.' His excellence at hitting off a jest or repartee, animated his pleadings; and, therefore, seemed not foreign to the business of the forum; but, by bringing it much into life, he offended numbers of people, and got the character of a malevolent man.

"About that time a number of young Romans of noble families, who lay under the charge of having violated the rules of discipline, and had not behaved with sufficient courage in time of service, were sent back to the prætor of Sicily. Cicero undertook their defence; and acquitted himself of it with great ability and success. As he returned to Rome, much elated with these advantages, he tells us he met with a pleasant adventure as he was on the road through Campania; meeting with a person of some eminence, with whom he was acquainted, he asked him what they said and thought of his actions in Rome, imagining that his name, and the glory of his achievements, had filled the whole city. His acquaintance answered, 'Why, where have you been then, Cicero, all this time?'

The authority of Cicero in Rome at that time was undoubtedly great; but he rendered himself obnoxious and burdensome to many; not by any ill action, but by continually praising and magnifying himself. He never entered the assembly of the people, the senate, or the courts of judicature, but Catiline and Lentulus were the burden of his song. Not satisfied with this, his writings were so interlarded with encomiums on himself, that, though his style was elegant and delightful, his discourses were disgusting and nauseous to the reader; for the blemish stuck to him like an incurable disease. But though he had such an insatiable avidity of honour, he was never unwilling that others should have their share; for he was entirely free from envy; and it appears from his works, that he was most liberal in his praises, not only of the ancients, but of those of his own time. Many of his remarkable sayings too of this nature are preserved. Thus of Aristotle, he said, That he was a river of flowing gold; and of Plato's Dialogues, That if Jupiter were to speak, he would speak as he did. Theophrastus he used to call his particular favourite: and being asked which of Demosthenes' orations he thought the best, he answered, the longest. Some who affect to be zealous admirers of that orator complain indeed of Cicero's saying in one of his Epistles, that Demosthenes sometimes nodded in his orations; but they forget the many great encomiums he bestowed on him in other parts of his works;

and do not consider that he gave the title of Philippics to his orations against Mark Antony, which were the most elaborate he ever wrote. There was not one of his cotemporaries celebrated either for his eloquence or philosophy, whose fame he did not promote either by speaking or writing of him in an advantageous manner.

"These were the effects of his vanity; and his superior keenness of expression, which he had at command, led him into many violations of decorum. He pleaded for Munatius in a certain cause; and his client was acquitted in consequence of his defence. Afterwards Munatius prosecuted Sabinus, one of Cicero's friends: upon which he was so much transported with anger as to say, 'Thinkest thou it was the merit of thy cause that saved thee, and not rather the cloud which I threw over thy crimes, and kept them from the sight of the court!' He had succeeded in an encomium on Marcus Crassus from the rostrum; and, a few days after, as publicly reproached him. 'What,' said Crassus, 'did you not lately praise me in the place where you now stand?' 'True,' answered Cicero, 'but I did that by way of experiment, to see what I could make of a bad subject.'

"Crassus had once affirmed that none of his family ever lived above threescore years; but afterwards wanted to contradict it, and said, 'What could I be thinking of when I asserted such a thing?' 'You knew,' said Cicero, 'that such an assertion would be agreeable to the people of Rome.'

"Crassus happened one day to profess himself much pleased with that maxim of the Stoics, 'The good man is always rich.' 'I imagine,' said Cicero, 'there is another more agreeable to you: All things belong to prudence.'

"For Crassus was notoriously covetous: Crassus had two sons; one of which resembled a man called Accius so much, that his mother was suspected of an intrigue with him. This young man spoke in the senate with great applause; and Cicero being asked what he thought of him, answered in Greek, "Axios Crassow;" (which signifies either the Accius of Crassus, or, worthy of Crassus.) When Crassus was going to set out for Syria, he thought it better to leave Cicero his friend than his enemy; and, therefore, addressed him one day in an obliging manner, and told him, he would come and sup with him; Cicero accepted the offer with equal politeness. A few days after, Vatinius likewise applied to him, by his friends, and desired a reconciliation. 'What,' said Cicero, 'does Vatinius too want to sup with me?' such were his jests upon Crassus.

"Vatinius had scrophulous tumours in his neck; and, one day when he was pleading, Cicero called him a *tumid* orator.

"An account was once brought Cicero that Vatinius was dead; which being afterwards contradicted, he said, 'May vengeance seize the tongue that told the lie!'

"And when Clodius told Cicero that the judges did not give credit to his depositions, 'Yes,' said he, 'five-and-twenty of them believed me; for so many condemned you; nor did the other thirty believe you, for they did not acquit you till they had received your money.'"

FINIS.

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